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The Complete Works of

BEDE

(672/673-735 AD)



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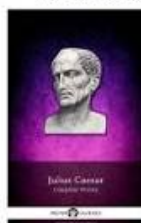
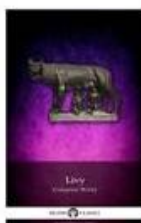
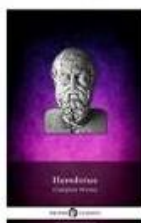
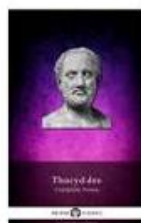


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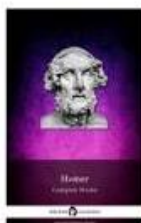
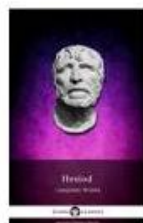
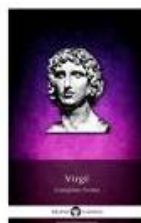
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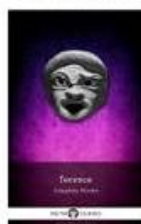
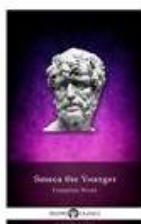
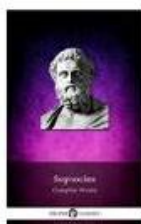
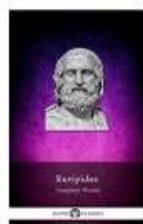
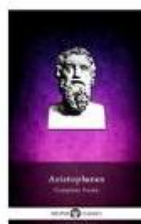
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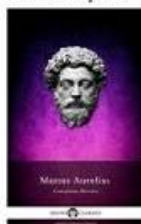
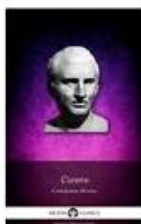
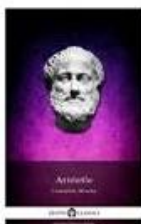
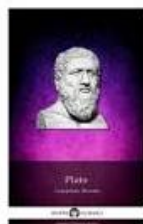
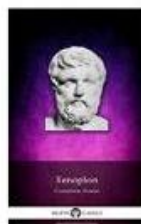
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The Complete Works of
THE VENERABLE BEDE



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Complete Works of Bede

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The Translations



Monkwearmouth and Jarrow in modern-day Sunderland, North East England — Bede records his birthplace as “on the lands of this monastery” in his ‘Historia’.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF THE ENGLISH PEOPLE



Translated by A. M. Sellar

Believed to have been completed in AD 731, when Bede was approximately fifty-nine-years-old, his *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* narrates the history of the Christian Churches in England, focusing on the conflict between Roman and Celtic Christianity. It is considered to be one of the most important original references on Anglo-Saxon history, playing a central role in the development of an English national identity.

Divided into five books, the *Historia* covers the history of England, ecclesiastical and political, from the time of Julius Caesar to the date of its completion (AD 731). The first of the five books begins with geographical background on the country, before sketching the history of England, beginning with Caesar's invasion in 55 BC. A brief account of Christianity in Roman Britain, including the martyrdom of Saint Alban, is followed by the account of Augustine's mission to England in 597, bringing Christianity to the Anglo-Saxons. The second book opens with the death of Gregory the Great in 604 and follows the further progress of Christianity in Kent and the first attempts to evangelise Northumbria. These attempts encountered a setback when Penda, the pagan king of Mercia, killed the newly Christian Edwin of Northumbria at the Battle of Hatfield Chase in c. 632.

The third book recounts the growth of Christianity in Northumbria under kings Oswald and Oswy, as the book culminates with the account of the Council of Whitby, traditionally seen as a major turning point in English history. The fourth book begins with the consecration of Theodore as Archbishop of Canterbury, recounting Wilfrid's efforts to bring Christianity to the kingdom of Sussex. The fifth book brings the story up to Bede's day, including an account of missionary work in Frisia and of the conflict with the British church over the correct dating of Easter. Bede also wrote a *Preface* for the work, in which he dedicates the *History* to Ceolwulf, king of Northumbria.

Aiding Bede's composition, the monastery at Jarrow had an excellent library. Both Benedict Biscop and Ceolfrith had acquired books from the Continent, and in Bede's day the monastery was a renowned centre of learning. For the period prior to Augustine's arrival in 597, the historian drew on earlier writers, including Orosius, Eutropius, Pliny and Solinus. He used Constantius's *Life of Germanus* as a source for Germanus' visits to Britain. Bede's account of the invasion of the Anglo-Saxons is drawn largely from Gildas's *De Excidio et Conquestu Britanniae*. Bede would also have been

familiar with more recent accounts such as Eddius Stephanus's *Life of Wilfrid* and anonymous *Lives of Gregory the Great and Cuthbert*. He also drew on Josephus' *Antiquities* and the works of Cassiodorus.

Bede also had correspondents that supplied him with material. Albinus, the abbot of the monastery in Canterbury, provided much information about the church in Kent, and with the assistance of Nothhelm, at that time a priest in London, obtained copies of Gregory the Great's correspondence from Rome relating to Augustine's mission. Almost all of Bede's information regarding Augustine is taken from these letters, including the Libellus responsionum, as Chapter 27 of Book I is often known. Bede acknowledged his correspondents in the preface to the *History*.

One of the striking themes of the *Historia* is that the conversion of the British Isles to Christianity had been largely the work of Irish and Italian missionaries, with little effort made by the native Britons. This theme was developed from Gildas' work, which denounced the sins of the native rulers during the invasions, with the elaboration by Bede that the invasion and settlement of the British Isles by the Angles and Saxons was God's punishment for the lack of missionary effort and the refusal to accept the Roman date for celebrating Easter. Although Bede discusses the history of Christianity in Roman Britain, significantly he utterly ignores the missionary work of Saint Patrick. He writes approvingly of Aidan and Columba, who came from Ireland as missionaries to the Picts and Northumbrians, but disapproved of the failure of the Welsh to evangelise the invading Anglo-Saxons. Bede was a partisan of Rome, regarding Gregory the Great, rather than Augustine, as the true apostle of the English. Likewise, in his treatment of the conversion of the invaders, any native involvement is minimised, such as when discussing Chad of Mercia's first consecration, when Bede mentions that two British bishops took part in the consecration, thus invalidating it.

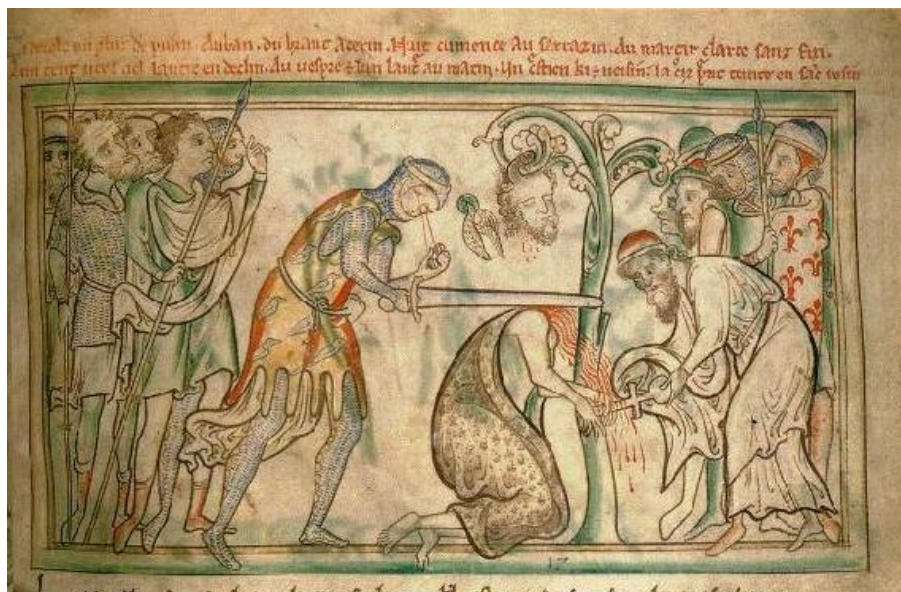
The *Historia* was copied often in the Middle Ages and about 160 manuscripts survive. About half of these are located on the European continent, rather than on the British Isles. Most of the eighth and ninth century texts of Bede's great work come from the northern parts of the Carolingian Empire. This total does not include manuscripts with only a part of the work, of which another hundred or so survive. It was printed for the first time between 1474 and 1482, most likely at Strasbourg, France.

The *Historia* has attained Bede a great reputation, but his concerns were different from those of a modern writer of history. His focus on the history of the organisation of the English church and on heresies and the efforts made to root them out, led him to exclude the secular history of kings and kingdoms except where a moral lesson could be drawn or where they illuminated events in the church. Besides the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, the medieval writers William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon, and Geoffrey of Monmouth used his works as sources and inspirations. Early modern writers, such as Polydore Virgil and Matthew Parker, the Elizabethan Archbishop of

Canterbury, also utilised the *Historia* and Bede's works were used by both Protestant and Catholic sides in the Wars of Religion.

1875

An original manuscript page from the St Petersburg Bede



The martyrdom of Saint Alban, from a 13th Century manuscript, now in the Trinity College Library — a key event from the early books of the 'Historia'

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Continuation



Pope Gregory dictating the Gregorian chant — Bede was a partisan of Rome, regarding Gregory the Great, as the true apostle of the English

Editor's Preface

The English version of the "Ecclesiastical History" in the following pages is a revision of the translation of Dr. Giles, which is itself a revision of the earlier rendering of Stevens. In the present edition very considerable alterations have been made, but the work of Dr. Giles remains the basis of the translation. The Latin text used throughout is Mr. Plummer's. Since the edition of Dr. Giles appeared in 1842, so much fresh work on the subject has been done, and recent research has brought so many new facts to light, that it has been found necessary to rewrite the notes almost entirely, and to add a new introduction. After the appearance of Mr. Plummer's edition of the Historical Works of Bede, it might seem superfluous, for the present at least, to write any notes at all on the "Ecclesiastical History." The present volume, however, is intended to fulfil a different and much humbler function. There has been no attempt at any original work, and no new theories are advanced. The object of the book is merely to present in a short and convenient form the substance of the views held by trustworthy authorities, and it is hoped that it may be found useful by those students who have either no time or no inclination to deal with more important works.

Among the books of which most use has been made, are Mr. Plummer's edition of the "Ecclesiastical History," Messrs. Mayor and Lumby's edition of Books III and IV, Dr. Bright's "Early English Church History," and Dr. Hunt's "History of the English Church from its foundation to the Norman Conquest." Many of the articles in the "Dictionary of Christian Biography" and the "Dictionary of Christian Antiquities," Dr. Mason's "Mission of St. Augustine," Dr. Rhys's "Celtic Britain," and a number of other books, mentioned in the notes, have been consulted.

For help received in different ways I wish to express my gratitude to various correspondents and friends. I am particularly indebted to Mr. Edward Bell, who has kindly revised my proofs and made many valuable suggestions. For information on certain points I have to thank the Rev. Charles Plummer, Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, Professor Lindsay of St. Andrews University, Miss Wordsworth, Principal, and Miss Lodge, Vice-Principal of Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford; and in a very special sense I wish to acknowledge my obligations to Miss Paterson, Assistant Librarian at the University Library, St. Andrews, whose unfailing kindness in verifying references, and supplying me with books, has greatly lightened my labours.

Introduction

There are, it has been estimated, in England and on the Continent, in all about 140 manuscripts of the “Ecclesiastical History.” Of these, four date from the eighth century: the Moore MS. (Cambridge), so called, because, after being sold by auction in the reign of William III, it came into the possession of Bishop Moore, who bequeathed it to the University of Cambridge; Cotton, Tiberius A, xiv; Cotton, Tiberius C, ii; and the Namur MS. A detailed account of these, as well as of a great number of other manuscripts, will be found in Mr. Plummer’s Introduction to his edition of Bede’s Historical Works. He has been the first to collate the four oldest MSS., besides examining numerous others and collating them in certain passages. He has pointed out that two of the MSS. dating from the eighth century (the century in which Bede died), the Moore MS. and Cotton, Tiberius A, xiv, point to a common original which cannot be far removed from Bede’s autograph. We are thus brought very near to our author, and may have more than in most cases the assurance that we have before us what he actually meant to say.

The earliest editions were printed on the Continent; the “editio princeps” is believed to date from 1475. A number of editions followed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the first in England was published by Abraham Whelock at Cambridge in 1643-4. Smith’s edition in 1722 marked a new era in the history of the book. It was the first critical edition, the text being based on the Moore MS. collated with three others, of which two were eighth century MSS.; and succeeding editors, Stevenson (1841), Giles (1842), Hussey (1846), the editor in the “Monumenta Historica Britannica” (1848), Moberly (1869), Holder (1882), base their work mainly on Smith’s. Mr. Mayor and Mr. Lumby together edited Books III and IV with excellent notes in 1878. Their text “reproduces exactly the Moore MS.” which they collated with some other Cambridge MSS. (cf. Mayor and Lumby, Excursus II). In 1896 the Rev. C. Plummer published his edition of Bede’s Historical Works, the first critical edition since Smith’s, and “the very first which exhibits in an *apparatus criticus* the various readings of the MSS. on which the text is based.” For the student of Bede this admirable book is of the highest value, and the labours of all succeeding editors are made comparatively light. Besides the most minute and accurate work on the text, it contains a copious and interesting commentary and the fullest references to the various sources upon which the editor has drawn.

The first translation of the “Ecclesiastical History” is the Anglo-Saxon version, executed either by Alfred himself or under his immediate supervision. Of this version Dr. Hodgkin says: “As this book had become a kind of classic among churchmen, Alfred allowed himself here less liberty than in some of his other translations. Some letters, epitaphs, and similar documents are omitted, and there is an almost complete erasure of the

chapters relating to the wearisome Paschal controversy. In other respects the king's translation seems to be a fairly accurate reproduction of the original work." Mr. Plummer, however, finds it "very rarely available for the settlement of minute differences of reading."

The first modern English translation is Thomas Stapleton's (1565), published at Antwerp. It is a controversial work, intended to point out to Queen Elizabeth "in how many and weighty pointes the pretended refourmers of the Church ... have departed from the patern of that sounde and Catholike faith planted first among Englishmen by holy S. Augustin, our Apostle, and his vertuous company, described truly and sincerely by Venerable Bede, so called in all Christendom for his passing vertues and rare lerning, the Author of this History." To save Elizabeth's time "in espying out the particulars," the translator has "gathered out of the whole History a number of diversities between the pretended religion of Protestants and the primitive faith of the english Church." If charm and appropriateness of style were the only qualities to be aimed at in a translation, we might well content ourselves with this rendering, which fills with despair the translator of to-day, debarred by his date from writing Elizabethan English.

The work was again translated by John Stevens (1723), and a third time (with some omissions) by W. Hurst in 1814. In 1840 Dr. Giles published a new edition of Stevens's translation with certain alterations; and a second edition of the same volume was published in 1842, and incorporated in the collected works of Bede, edited by Dr. Giles. In 1870 a literal translation by the Rev. L. Gidley was published. The present volume is a revision of the translation of Dr. Giles.

A brief analysis of the work may be of some use to the student in keeping distinct the different threads of the narrative, as owing to the variety of subjects introduced, and the want of strict chronological order, it is difficult to grasp the sequence of events as a coherent whole.

The sources from which Bede draws his material are briefly indicated in the dedication to King Ceolwulf which forms the Preface, and in it he acknowledges his obligations to the friends and correspondents who have helped and encouraged him. For the greater part of Book I (cc. 1-22), which forms the introduction to his real subject, he depends on earlier authors. Here he does not specify his sources, but indicates them generally as *priorum scripta*. These authors are mainly Pliny, Solinus, Orosius, Eutropius, and the British historian Gildas. In the story of Germanus and Lupus he follows closely the Life of Germanus by Constantius of Lyons. Prosper of Aquitaine also supplies him with some materials. When he comes to his main subject, the History of the English Church, he appears to rely but little upon books. Only a very few are referred to here and there, *e.g.*, The Life of St. Fursa, The Life of St. Ethelburg, Adamnan's work on the Holy Places, and the Anonymous Life of St. Cuthbert. That some form of annalistic records existed

before his time, and that these were consulted by him, we may infer from some of his chronological references (cf. iii, 1, 9). Local information with regard to provinces other than Northumbria he obtains from his correspondents in various parts of England, and these are expressly mentioned in the Preface.

For the history of the Roman mission and of Kent generally, as well as some particulars with regard to the conversion of other provinces, his chief source is the Church of Canterbury, which apparently possessed, besides oral tradition, written documents relating to the first beginnings of the Church. Moreover, Nothelm, who was the bearer of much important material, had been to Rome and had permission to search the papal archives. But it is in dealing with the history of Northumbria, as is natural, that Bede's information is most varied and copious. Much of it is apparently obtained directly from eye-witnesses of the events, much would doubtless be preserved in the records of the Church of Lindisfarne, to which he had access, perhaps also in his own monastery. We know that the monasteries kept calendars in which the death-days of saints and others were entered, and other records of similar nature (cf. iv, 14), and that these were used as materials for history.

Passing to the history itself, we may trace a division of subjects or periods roughly analogous to the division into books. Book I contains the long introduction, the sending of the Roman mission, and the foundation of the Church; Books II and III, the period of missionary activity and the establishment of Christianity throughout the land. Book IV may be said to describe the period of organization. In Book V the English Church itself becomes a missionary centre, planting the faith in Germany, and drawing the Celtic Churches into conformity with Rome.

Book I. — In Book I, cc. 1-22, Bede sketches the early history of Britain, describing the country and giving some account of the various races by whom it was inhabited. The story of the Roman occupation is narrated at some length, the invasions of the Picts and Scots and consequent miseries of the Britons, their appeals for help to the Romans, the final departure of their protectors, and the coming of the Saxons are described. We have some shadowy outlines of British Church History in the legendary account of the conversion of King Lucius, in the story of St. Alban, affording evidence of a great persecution of Christians during the Roman occupation, in the allusions to the Arian and Pelagian heresies, and in the mission of Germanus and Lupus. A brief allusion to the mission of Palladius is all that we hear of the Irish Church at this period.

These chapters are introductory to the main subject, the History of the English Church, which begins in Chapter 23 with the mission of St. Augustine in 597 a.d. The reception of the Christian faith in the kingdom of Kent and the foundation of a national Church occupy the remaining chapters of the book. Various letters of Pope Gregory relating to the mission and his

answers to the questions of Augustine are given at length; and the Book concludes with a piece of Northumbrian history, Ethelfrid's conquests of the Britons and the defeat of Aedan, king of the Dalriadic Scots, at Degsastan in 603 a.d.

Book II. — Book II opens with a biographical sketch of Gregory the Great, the founder of the Mission. This is followed by an account of Augustine's negotiations with the leaders of the British Church with regard to the Paschal question and some other matters, his failure to win them over (a failure apparently largely due to his own want of tact in dealing with the susceptible Celtic temperament), his alleged prophecy of disaster and its fulfilment some time after at the battle of Chester. Then we have the consecration of Mellitus to London, as Bishop of the East Saxons, and Justus to Rochester (604 a.d.); the evangelization of the East Saxons by Mellitus; the death of Augustine and succession of Laurentius as Archbishop (no date is given; it may have been in 605); fresh attempts at union with the Celtic Churches, in which again we can perceive a failure of courtesy on the one side met by an obstinate pride on the other. The death of Ethelbert in Kent (616 a.d.) and that of Sabert in Essex, soon after, lead to a pagan reaction in both provinces; Mellitus and Justus take refuge on the Continent; Laurentius, intending to follow them, is stopped by a vision which leads to the conversion of King Eadbald and the recovery of Kent for Christianity. Essex, however, continues to be pagan. On the death of Laurentius (619 a.d.), Mellitus succeeds to Canterbury and is himself succeeded by Justus (in 624). In Chapter 9 we enter upon a new development of the highest importance in the work of the mission. The marriage of Edwin, king of Northumbria, and the Kentish princess, Ethelberg, brings about the conversion of Northumbria through the preaching of Paulinus. The story is told in detail. Letters from Pope Boniface to Edwin and his consort are quoted at length, Edwin's early history with its bearing on the great crisis of his life is related; finally we have the decisive debate in the Witenagemot at Goodmanham and the baptism of the king at Easter, 627 a.d. Through the influence of Edwin on Earpwald, king of East Anglia, that province is next converted, but on the death of Earpwald the people lapse into paganism for three years, till Christianity is finally established by the labours of Bishop Felix, under the enlightened King Sigbert, who had himself been drawn to the faith in Gaul.

Meanwhile, peace and prosperity reign in Northumbria, and Paulinus extends his preaching to Lindsey. He re-receives the pall from Pope Honorius, in accordance with the original intention of Gregory that the Bishop of York should rank as a metropolitan. At Canterbury, Justus is succeeded by Archbishop Honorius. Parenthetically we have extracts from letters, probably of the year 640 a.d., addressed by the Roman see to the Irish clergy on the Paschal question and the Pelagian heresy.

In Chapter 20 we have a dramatic climax to the book in the overthrow and death of Edwin at the battle of Hatfield in 633 a.d.; the devastation of

Northumbria by the British king, Caedwalla, and Penda of Mercia; and the flight of Paulinus, taking with him Ethelberg and Eanfled to Kent, where he ends his life in charge of the Church of Rochester. His work in Northumbria seems for the time, at least, wholly overthrown. Only James the Deacon remains heroically at his post to keep alive the smouldering embers of the faith.

Book III. — Book III opens with the story of the apostasy of the Northumbrian kings and the miseries of the “Hateful Year,” terminated by the victory of Oswald at Heavenfield in 634 a.d. Christianity is brought again to Northumbria (635 a.d.) by the Celtic Mission, sent from Iona at the request of Oswald, who nobly co-operates with Aidan in the work of evangelization. Aidan fixes his see at Lindisfarne. The mention of Iona leads to a short account of the mission of St. Columba to the Northern Picts in 565 a.d., and incidentally of St. Ninian’s mission to the Southern Picts “long before”; the grant of Iona to St. Columba, and its constitution, the character of its monks and their error with regard to Easter. The characters of Aidan and Oswald are described; and the union of Deira and Bernicia under Oswald is briefly mentioned.

In Chapter 7 we pass to a fresh missionary enterprise. Birinus, sent to Britain by Pope Honorius, converts the West Saxons. Their king, Cynegils, is baptized, and a see is established at Dorchester, in Oxfordshire. Under Coinwalch, the successor of Cynegils, the province passes through various vicissitudes, political and ecclesiastical, and finally the West Saxon see is fixed at Winchester.

In Kent, Earconbert succeeds Eadbald in 640 a.d., and takes vigorous measures for the suppression of idolatry. His daughter, Earcongota, and many other high-born English ladies enter the religious life in Gaul, for convents are still scarce in England.

In Chapter 9, reverting to the history of Northumbria, Bede tells us of the death of Oswald at Maserfelth in 642, and relates at length various miracles wrought by his relics. Oswald is succeeded by Oswy in Bernicia and in Deira by Oswin. The latter is treacherously murdered by Oswy; his character is described. The death of Aidan (in 651) immediately follows that of his beloved king; Aidan’s miracles are related, and a warm tribute is paid to his character, in spite of the inevitable error with regard to Easter, which is severely condemned.

In Chapter 18, passing again to East Anglian history, we hear of King Sigbert’s services to education, and of his retirement to a monastery from which he was forcibly drawn to fall in battle against the Mercians. (The chronology is here very vague.) A vision of the Irish St. Fursa, who founded the monastery of Cnobheresburg in East Anglia is told in detail. Changes in the episcopate in East Anglia and elsewhere are mentioned. Deusdedit succeeds Honorius as Archbishop of Canterbury in 654.

Again, a Northumbrian prince gives a fresh impulse to the spread of

Christianity. In 653 the Middle Angles (who occupied a part of Mercia) are converted, their prince, Penda, being persuaded chiefly by his brother-in-law, Alchfrid, a son of Oswy. Four priests are sent to them to preach and baptize, Cedd, Adda, Betti, and Diuma, and Diuma becomes bishop of the Middle Angles and Mercians. Similarly, at this time, King Sigbert of Essex listens to the exhortations of his friend, King Oswy, and, at the preaching of Cedd, the East Saxons receive the faith a second time. Cedd becomes their bishop. Sigbert's tragic death is related. His successor, Suidhelm, receives baptism at the hands of Cedd. The foundation of Lastingham by Ethelwald of Deira and its consecration by Cedd are described. Cedd dies of the plague of 664.

Meanwhile, important political changes have taken place in the north: the defeat and death of Penda at the Winwaed in 655 are followed by Oswy's rule, which established Christianity in Mercia, in spite of a successful rebellion after three years, when the Mercians threw off the yoke of Northumbria and set up Penda's son, Wulfhere, as their king.

In Chapter 25 we come to the Synod of Whitby (664 a.d.), which settled the Easter question for the English Church. Wilfrid comes to the front as a champion of the Catholic rules. The opposing party either retire or conform. The self-denial and devotion of the Celtic missionaries are highly praised, and some account of the life led by English students in Ireland follows, with the story of the self-dedication of Egbert, who is destined to play a prominent part afterwards in the history of the Church.

The consecration of both Wilfrid and Ceadda (664 a.d.), as bishops of Northumbria leads to complications in the episcopate. An important step towards the unity of the English nation in ecclesiastical matters is taken when Wighard is sent to Rome by the kings Oswy and Egbert, acting in concert, to be consecrated as Archbishop of Canterbury (667 a.d.). Wighard dies there, and Pope Vitalian undertakes to find an archbishop for the English Church.

The book ends with a fresh apostasy in Essex during the miseries of the great plague of 664. Mercia, so lately itself evangelized, becomes a new missionary centre, King Wulfhere sending Bishop Jaruman to recall the East Saxons to the faith.

Book IV. — In all but one of the kingdoms of England Christianity is now, at least in name, established, and the Church settles down to the work of organization. The man for this task is found in Theodore of Tarsus, consecrated Archbishop of the English in 668. He arrives at Canterbury in 669. We hear at once of the vigorous impulse given by him and Abbot Hadrian to the various departments of education there. Finding an irregularity in Ceadda's orders, he completes his ordination and makes him Bishop of the Mercians (probably in 669), with his see at Lichfield. Ceadda's death (672 a.d.), his character, and the miracles and visions connected with him are described. Parenthetically we get an account of Colman's activity in Ireland after his retirement, in consequence of the decision at Whitby. The most

important political events at this time are the death of Oswy and succession of Egfrid in Northumbria in 670 or 671, and the death of Egbert and succession of Hlothere in Kent in 673.

In the same year the Council of Hertford, the first English provincial council, is held, and marks the strength and independence of the Church. Theodore proceeds with his reforms in the episcopate. Various events of ecclesiastical importance follow; the East Anglian diocese is divided about this time, and other changes are effected.

Essex, so long prone to lapses into paganism, becomes at this time a centre of religious life under its Bishop Earconwald and its king Sebbi. Earconwald, whose holiness is attested by many miraculous circumstances, was the founder of the monasteries of Chertsey and Barking, the latter of which was ruled by his sister, the saintly Ethelburg. Various miracles are related in connection with her and her monastery. The king of the East Saxons, Sebbi, is a man of unusual piety who resigns his kingdom and receives the tonsure.

After a brief allusion to West Saxon history, the devastation of Kent by Ethelred of Mercia in 676, and certain changes in the episcopate, we come to an important step in the organization of the Church taken by Theodore. In pursuance of his policy of increasing the number of bishops, he subdivides the great Northumbrian diocese. Wilfrid is expelled (678 a.d.). From these events we pass summarily to the evangelization of the South Saxons by Wilfrid, who extends his labours to the Isle of Wight, and thus the last of the English provinces is won for the faith.

In the Council of Hatfield (680 a.d.) the English Church asserts its orthodoxy and unites with the continental Churches in repudiating the heresy of the Monothelites. Turning to Northumbrian history, we have the story of Egfrid's queen, Ethelthryth, and a hymn composed in her honour by Bede. The war between Mercia and Northumbria in 679 is ended by the mediation of Theodore, and a miracle in connection with the battle of the Trent is related.

The remainder of the book is occupied mainly with Northumbrian history, the life and death of Hilda, Abbess of Whitby, the story of the poet Caedmon, the destruction of Coldingham, prophesied by the monk Adamnan, Egfrid's invasion of Ireland (684 a.d.) and of the country of the Picts (685 a.d.), his defeat and death in that year, the decline of Northumbria, the flight of Bishop Trumwine from Abercorn, and the succession of Aldfrid to the kingdom. The death of Hlothere of Kent (685 a.d.) is followed by anarchy in that province, till Wictred succeeds and restores peace.

In Chapters 27-32 we have an account of the life of St. Cuthbert and stories of the miracles wrought by his relics.

Book V. — Book V opens with the story of the holy Ethelwald, who succeeded Cuthbert as anchorite at Farne, and a miracle wrought through his intercession. This is followed (cc. 2-6) by an account of John of Beverley,

Bishop of Hexham, and the miracles attributed to him. In Chapter 7 we have a piece of West Saxon history: Caedwalla, King of Wessex, after a life of war and bloodshed, goes to Rome to receive baptism there, and dies immediately after his admission into the Church (689 a.d.). He is succeeded by Ini, who in 725 likewise ended his days at Rome.

In 690 Theodore dies, after an episcopate of twenty-two years. Bertwald succeeds him at Canterbury in 693.

At this time Englishmen begin to extend their missionary enterprise abroad. Various missions are undertaken by men who have lived long in Ireland and caught the Celtic zeal for the work of evangelization. The story is told of the attempted mission of Egbert to Germany and the unsuccessful venture of Witbert. Wilbrord (in 690) and others plant the faith among the German tribes.

The vision of Drythelm is inserted here, probably on chronological grounds ("his temporibus"), and other visions of the future world follow.

Apparently about the same time a change is effected in the attitude of the greater part of the Celtic Church towards the Paschal question. The Northern Irish are converted to the Roman usages by Adamnan, Abbot of Iona, whose book on the "Holy Places" is here described (cc. 16-17).

The death of Aldfrid and succession of Osred in Northumbria in 705 are the next events narrated.

About this time the division of the West Saxon diocese is carried out, Aldhelm being appointed to Sherborne and Daniel to Winchester; the South Saxons receive a bishop of their own for the first time. In 709 a.d. Coenred of Mercia and Offa of Essex receive the tonsure at Rome, and in the same year Bishop Wilfrid dies. The story of his life is told.

Not long after, Hadrian dies and is succeeded by Albinus as Abbot of St. Augustine's. Bede's friend, Acca, succeeds Wilfrid as Bishop of Hexham. His services to the Church are enumerated.

An important step is taken at this time by the Northern Picts in the acceptance of the Roman rules with regard to Easter and the tonsure. The letter of Abbot Ceolfrid of Wearmouth and Jarrow to the Pictish king Naiton on this subject is quoted at length. Soon after, Iona yields to the preaching of Egbert, and receives the Catholic usages. Egbert dies in 729. In Chapter 23 a number of events are briefly mentioned; the death of Wictred of Kent in 725, and the succession of his sons, the death of the learned Tobias, Bishop of Rochester, in 726, the appearance of two comets in 729, followed by the devastation of Gaul by the Saracens, the death of the Northumbrian king Osric, and succession of Ceolwulf in 729; finally, the death of Archbishop Bertwald in 731 and the succession of Tatwine. Then follows an account of the state of the English episcopate in 731, the year in which Bede finished the History. The relations of the English with Picts, Scots, and Britons are described, and some allusion is made to the growth of monasticism in this time of external peace.

The book closes in Chapter 24 with a chronological summary of the whole work, an autobiographical sketch of the author, and a list of his works.

Life of Bede

Few lives afford less material for the biographer than Bede's; few seem to possess a more irresistible fascination. Often as the simple story has been told, the desire to tell it afresh appears to be perennial. And yet it is perhaps as wholly devoid of incident as any life could be. The short autobiographical sketch at the end of the "Ecclesiastical History" tells us practically all: that he was born in the territory of the twin monastery of Wearmouth and Jarrow; that at the age of seven he was sent by his kinsfolk to be brought up, first under the Abbot Benedict, afterwards under Ceolfrid; that in his nineteenth year (the canonical age was twenty-five) he was admitted to the diaconate, and received priest's orders in his thirtieth year, in both instances at the hands of John, Bishop of Hexham, and by order of the Abbot Ceolfrid; that he spent his whole life in the monastery in learning, in teaching, and in writing, and in the observance of the monastic rule and attendance at the daily services of the Church. Of his family we know nothing; the name Beda appears to have been not uncommon. The fact that he was handed over by kinsmen ("cura propinquorum") to Abbot Benedict would seem to imply that he was an orphan when he entered the monastery at the age of seven, but it was not unusual for parents to dedicate their infant children to the religious life, in many cases even at an earlier age than Bede's. We may compare the story of the little boy, Aesica, at Barking, related by Bede, and of Elfred, the daughter of Oswy, dedicated by her father before she was a year old.

The epithet "Venerable," commonly attached to his name, has given rise to more than one legend. It was apparently first applied to him in the ninth century, and is said to have been an appellation of priests. The best known of these legends is Fuller's story of a certain "dunce monk" who set about writing Bede's epitaph, and being unable to complete the verse, "Hic sunt in fossa Bedae ... ossa," went to bed with his task unfinished. Returning to it in the morning, he found that an angel had filled the gap with the word "venerabilis." Another account tells how Bede, in his old age, when his eyes were dim, was induced by certain "mockers" to preach, under the mistaken belief that the people were assembled to hear him. As he ended his sermon with a solemn invocation of the Trinity, the angels (in one version it is the stones of a rocky valley) responded "Amen, very venerable Bede."

The land on which Bede was born was granted by Egfrid to Benedict Biscop for the foundation of the monasteries a short time after the birth of Bede. Wearmouth was founded in 674, Jarrow in 681 or 682. Bede was among those members of the community who were transferred to Jarrow under Abbot Ceolfrid, and under his rule and that of his successor, Huaetbert, he passed his life. With regard to the chief dates, the authorities differ, Simeon of Durham and others placing his birth as late as 677. Bede himself tells us

that he was in his fifty-ninth year when he wrote the short autobiography at the end of the History. That work was finished in 731, and there seems to be no good reason to suppose that the autobiographical sketch was written at a later time. We may infer then that he was born in 673, that he was ordained deacon in 691 and priest in 702. For his death, 735, the date given in the "Continuation," seems to be supported by the evidence of the letter of Cuthbert to Cuthwin (v. *infra*). From this it appears that he died on a Wednesday, which nevertheless is called Ascension Day, implying, doubtless, that his death occurred on the eve, after the festival had begun, according to ecclesiastical reckoning. It is further explained that Ascension Day was on the 26th of May ("VII Kal. Junii"), which was actually the case in the year 735.

Beyond the testimony borne to his exceptional diligence as a student in a letter from Alcuin to the monks of Wearmouth and Jarrow, we hear nothing of his childhood and early youth. One anecdote in the Anonymous History of the Abbots may perhaps refer to him, though no name is given. It tells how, when the plague of 686 devastated the monastery, the Abbot Ceolfrid, for lack of fit persons to assist at the daily offices, decided to recite the psalms without antiphons, except at vespers and matins. But after a week's trial, unable to bear it any longer, he restored the antiphons to their proper place, and with the help of one little boy carried on the services in the usual manner. This little boy is described as being, at the time the History was written, a priest of that monastery who "duly, both by his words and writings, commends the Abbot's praiseworthy deeds to all who seek to know them," and he has generally been supposed to be Bede.

In the "Ecclesiastical History" (IV, 3) there is an allusion to Bede's teachers, one of whom, Trumbert, educated at Lastingham under Ceadda, is mentioned by name. The monastery of Wearmouth and Jarrow must have offered exceptional facilities for study. Benedict had enriched it with many treasures which he brought with him from his travels. Chief among these was the famous library which he founded and which was enlarged by Abbot Ceolfrid. Here Bede acquired that wide and varied learning revealed in his historical, scientific, and theological works. He studied with particular care and reverence the patristic writings; his theological treatises were, as he says, "compiled out of the works of the venerable Fathers." He must have had a considerable knowledge of Greek, probably he knew some Hebrew. Though he is not wholly free from the mediaeval churchman's distrust of pagan authors, he constantly betrays his acquaintance with them, and the sense of form which must unconsciously influence the student of classical literature has passed into his own writings and preserved him from the barbarism of monkish Latin. His style is singularly clear, simple, and fluent, as free from obscurity as from affectation and bombast.

Thus was the foundation laid of that sound learning upon which his widespread influence both as a teacher and writer was reared. "I always took

delight," he tells us, "in learning, or teaching, or writing." Probably his writing was, as is so often the case, the outcome of his teaching; his object in both is to meet "the needs of the brethren." One of his pupils was Archbishop Egbert, the founder of the school of York, which gave a fresh impulse to learning, not only in England, but through Alcuin in France, at a time when a revival was most to be desired.

It was to Egbert that he paid one of the only two visits which he records. In the "Epistola ad Ecgbertum" he alludes to a short stay he had made with him the year before, and declines, on account of the illness which proved to be his last, an invitation to visit him again. He visited Lindisfarne in connection with his task of writing the life of Cuthbert. Otherwise we have no authentic record of any absence from the monastery. The story that he went to Rome at the request of Pope Sergius, founded on a statement of William of Malmesbury, is now regarded as highly improbable. The oldest MS. of the letter of Sergius, requesting Ceolfrid to send one of his monks to Rome, has no mention of the name of Bede. If such an event had ever disturbed his accustomed course of life, it is inconceivable that he should nowhere allude to it. Still less is the assertion that he lived and taught at Cambridge one which need be seriously debated by the present generation.

We may fairly assume that, except for a few short absences such as the visits to York and Lindisfarne, his whole life was spent in the monastery. It must have been a life of unremitting toil. His writings, numerous as they are, covering a wide range of subjects and involving the severest study, can only have been a part of his work; he had, besides, his duties as priest, teacher, and member of a religious community to fulfil. Even the manual labour of his literary work must have been considerable. He did not employ an amanuensis, and he had not the advantages with regard to copyists which a member of one of the larger monasteries might have had. "Ipse mihi dictator simul notarius (= shorthand writer) et librarius (= copyist)," he writes. Yet he never flags. Through all the outward monotony of his days his own interest remains fresh. He "takes delight" ("dulce habui") in it all. It is a life full of eager activity in intellectual things, of a keen and patriotic interest in the wider life beyond the monastery walls, which shows itself sadly enough in his reflections on the evils of the times, of the ardent charity which spends itself in labour for the brethren, and, pervading the whole, that spirit of quiet obedience and devotion which his own simple words describe as "the observance of monastic rule and the daily charge of singing in the Church." We can picture him, at the appointed hours, breaking off his absorbing occupations to take his place at the daily offices, lest, as he believed, he should fail to meet the angels there. Alcuin records a saying of his, "I know that angels visit the canonical hours and the congregations of the brethren. What if they do not find me among the brethren? May they not say, 'Where is Bede?'"

It is probably here, in this harmony of work and devotion, that we may find the secret of the fascination in the record of his uneventful days. It reconciles

the sharp antithesis between the active and the contemplative life. It seems to attain to that ideal of "toil unsever'd from tranquillity" which haunts us all, but which we have almost ceased to associate with the life of man under present conditions. Balance, moderation, or rather, that rare quality which has been well called "the sanity of saintliness," these give a unity to the life of Bede and preserve him from the exaggerations of the conventual ideal. With all his admiration for the ascetic life, he recognizes human limitations. It is cheering to find that even he felt the need of a holiday. "Having completed," he writes, "the third book of the Commentary on Samuel, I thought I would rest awhile, and, after recovering in that way my delight in study and writing, proceed to take in hand the fourth." Intellectual power commands his homage, but his mind is open to the appreciation of all forms of excellence. It is the unlearned brother, unfit for study and occupied in manual labour, to whom, in his story, it is vouchsafed to hear the singing of the angels who came to summon Ceadda to his rest. The life of devotion ranks highest in his estimation, but he records with approval how St. Cuthbert thought "that to afford the weak brethren the help of his exhortation stood in the stead of prayer, knowing that He Who said 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God,' said likewise, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'" He tells us how St. Gregory bewailed his own loss in being forced by his office to be entangled in worldly affairs. "But," adds the human-hearted biographer, "it behoves us to believe that he lost nothing of his monastic perfection by reason of his pastoral charge, but rather that he gained greater profit through the labour of converting many, than by the former calm of his private life." Yet he holds that this immunity from the evil influence of the world was chiefly due to Gregory's care in organizing his house like a monastery and safeguarding the opportunities for prayer and devotional study, even while he was immersed in affairs at the court of Constantinople, and afterwards, when he held the most onerous office in the Church.

This quality of sanity shows itself again in an unusual degree of fairness to opponents. The Paschal error, indeed, moves his indignation in a manner which is incomprehensible and distasteful to the modern reader, but even in the perverse and erring Celts he can recognize "a zeal of God, though not according to knowledge." Aidan's holiness of life wins from him a warm tribute of admiration. In the monks of Iona, the stronghold of the Celtic system, he can perceive the fruit of good works and find an excuse for their error in their isolated situation. In the British Church it is the lack of missionary zeal, rather than their attitude towards the Easter question, which calls forth his strongest condemnation.

A characteristic akin to this is his love of truth. As a historian, it shows itself in his scrupulous care in investigating evidence and in acknowledging the sources from which he draws. Nowhere is his intellectual honesty more apparent than in dealing with what he believes to be the miraculous element in his history. In whatever way we may regard these anecdotes, there can be no

doubt that Bede took the utmost pains to assure himself of their authenticity. He is careful to acquire, if possible, first-hand evidence; where this cannot be obtained, he scrupulously mentions the lack of it. He admits only the testimony of witnesses of high character and generally quotes them by name.

These are but a few of the glimpses afforded us of the personality of Bede, a personality never obtruded, but everywhere unconsciously revealed in his work. Everywhere we find the impress of a mind of wide intellectual grasp, a character of the highest saintliness, and a gentle refinement of thought and feeling. The lofty spirituality of Bede, his great learning and scholarly attainment are the more striking when we reflect how recently his nation had emerged from barbarism and received Christianity and the culture which it brought with it to these shores.

The letter in which he declines Egbert's invitation on the plea of illness is dated November, 734. If we may assume that his death took place on the eve of Ascension Day in 735, no long period of enfeebled health clouded the close of his life, and weakness never interrupted his work. His death has been described by his pupil, Cuthbert, who afterwards became Abbot of Wearmouth and Jarrow in succession to Huaetbert, in the letter quoted below. He was first buried at Jarrow but, according to Simeon of Durham, his relics were stolen by the priest, Elfred, and carried to Durham. In 1104, when the bones of Cuthbert were translated to the new Cathedral, those of Bede were found with them. Not long after, Hugh de Puisac erected a shrine of gold and silver, adorned with jewels, in which he placed them, along with the relics of many other saints. The shrine disappeared at the Reformation, and only the stone on which it rested remains.

Letter of Cuthbert to Cuthwin.

“To his fellow-lector, Cuthwin, beloved in Christ, Cuthbert, his fellow-student, greeting and salvation for ever in the Lord. I have very gladly received the gift which thou sentest to me, and with much joy have read thy devout and learned letter, wherein I found that which I greatly desired, to wit, that masses and holy prayers are diligently offered by you for our father and master Bede, beloved of God. Wherefore I rejoice, rather for love of him than from confidence in my own power, to relate in few words after what manner he departed out of this world, understanding also that thou hast desired and asked this of me. He was troubled with weakness and chiefly with difficulty in breathing, yet almost without pain, for about a fortnight before the day of our Lord’s Resurrection; and thus he afterwards passed his time, cheerful and rejoicing, giving thanks to Almighty God every day and night, nay, every hour, till the day of our Lord’s Ascension, to wit, the twenty-sixth day of May, and daily gave lessons to us, his disciples; and whatsoever remained of the day he spent in singing psalms, as far as he was able; he also strove to pass all the night joyfully in prayer and thanksgiving to God, save only when a short sleep prevented it; and then he no sooner awoke than he straightway began again to repeat the well-known sacred songs, and ceased not to give thanks to God with uplifted hands. I declare with truth that I have never seen with my eyes, or heard with my ears, any man so earnest in giving thanks to the living God. O truly blessed man! He repeated the words of St. Paul the Apostle, ‘It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God,’ and much more out of Holy Scripture; wherein also he admonished us to think of our last hour, and to arise out of the sleep of the soul; and being learned in our native poetry, he said also in our tongue, concerning the dread parting of souls from the body:

Fore then neidfaerae
naenig uiuirthit
thonc suotturra
than him tharf sie
to ymb hycggannae
aer his hin iongae
huaet his gastae
godaes aeththa yflaes
aefter deothdaege
doemid uueorthae.

Which being interpreted is: “Before the inevitable journey hence, no man is wiser than is needful that he may consider, ere the soul departs, what good or evil it hath done and how it shall be judged after its departure.”

“He also sang antiphons for our comfort and his own. One of these is, ‘O King of Glory, Lord of all power, Who, triumphing this day, didst ascend

above all the heavens, leave us not comfortless, but send to us the promise of the Father, even the Spirit of Truth — Hallelujah.’ And when he came to the words, ‘leave us not comfortless,’ he burst into tears and wept much. And an hour after, he fell to repeating what he had begun. And this he did the whole day, and we, hearing it, mourned with him and wept. Now we read and now we lamented, nay, we wept even as we read. In such rapture we passed the fifty days’ festival till the aforesaid day; and he rejoiced greatly and gave God thanks, because he had been accounted worthy to suffer such weakness. And he often said, ‘God scourgeth every son whom He receiveth’; and the words of St. Ambrose, ‘I have not so lived as to be ashamed to live among you; but neither do I fear to die, because we have a merciful Lord.’ And during those days, besides the lessons we had daily from him, and the singing of the Psalms, there were two memorable works, which he strove to finish; to wit, his translation of the Gospel of St. John, from the beginning, as far as the words, ‘But what are they among so many?’ into our own tongue, for the benefit of the Church of God; and some selections from the books of Bishop Isidore, saying, ‘I would not have my boys read a lie, nor labour herein without profit after my death.’

“When the Tuesday before the Ascension of our Lord came, he began to suffer still more in his breathing, and there was some swelling in his feet. But he went on teaching all that day and dictating cheerfully, and now and then said among other things, ‘Learn quickly, I know not how long I shall endure, and whether my Maker will not soon take me away.’ But to us it seemed that haply he knew well the time of his departure; and so he spent the night, awake, in giving of thanks. And when the morning dawned, that is, on the Wednesday, he bade us write with all speed what we had begun. And this we did until the third hour. And from the third hour we walked in procession with the relics of the saints, according to the custom of that day. And there was one of us with him who said to him, ‘There is still one chapter wanting of the book which thou hast been dictating, but I deem it burdensome for thee to be questioned any further.’ He answered, ‘Nay, it is light, take thy pen and make ready, and write quickly.’ And this was done. But at the ninth hour he said to me, ‘I have certain treasures in my coffer, some spices, napkins and incense; run quickly and bring the priests of our monastery to me, that I may distribute among them the gifts which God has bestowed on me.’ And this I did trembling, and when they were come, he spoke to every one of them, admonishing and entreating them that they should diligently offer masses and prayers for him, and they promised readily. But they all mourned and wept, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, because they thought that they should see his face no long time in this world. But they rejoiced for that he said, ‘It is time for me, if it be my Maker’s will, to be set free from the flesh, and come to Him Who, when as yet I was not, formed me out of nothing. I have lived long; and well has my pitiful judge disposed my life for me; the time of my release is at hand; for my soul longs to see Christ my King

in His beauty.' Having said this and much more for our profit and edification, he passed his last day in gladness till the evening; and the aforesaid boy, whose name was Wilbert, still said, 'Dear master, there is yet one sentence not written.' He answered, 'It is well, write it.' Soon after, the boy said, 'Now it is written.' And he said, 'It is well, thou hast said truly, it is finished. Take my head in thy hands, for I rejoice greatly to sit facing my holy place where I was wont to pray, that I too, sitting there, may call upon my Father.' And thus on the pavement of his little cell, chanting 'Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost,' and the rest, he breathed his last.

"And without doubt we must believe that inasmuch as he had always been devout and earnest on earth in the praise of God, his soul was carried by angels to the joys of Heaven which he desired. And all who heard him or beheld the death of our father Bede, said that they had never seen any other end his life in so great devotion and peace. For, as thou hast heard, so long as the soul abode in the body, he chanted the 'Gloria Patri' and other words to the glory of God, and with outstretched hands ceased not to give thanks to God.

"But know this, that much could be told and written concerning him, but my want of learning cuts short my words. Nevertheless, with the help of God, I purpose at leisure to write more fully concerning him, of those things which I saw with my own eyes and heard with my own ears."

Preface

To the most glorious king Ceolwulf. Bede, the servant of Christ and Priest.

I formerly, at your request, most readily sent to you the Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation, which I had lately published, for you to read and judge; and I now send it again to be transcribed, and more fully studied at your leisure. And I rejoice greatly at the sincerity and zeal, with which you not only diligently give ear to hear the words of Holy Scripture, but also industriously take care to become acquainted with the actions and sayings of former men of renown, especially of our own nation. For if history relates good things of good men, the attentive hearer is excited to imitate that which is good; or if it recounts evil things of wicked persons, none the less the conscientious and devout hearer or reader, shunning that which is hurtful and wrong, is the more earnestly fired to perform those things which he knows to be good, and worthy of the service of God. And as you have carefully marked this, you are desirous that the said history should be more fully made known to yourself, and to those over whom the Divine Authority has appointed you governor, from your great regard to the common good. But to the end that I may remove all occasion of doubting what I have written, both from yourself and other readers or hearers of this history, I will take care briefly to show you from what authors I chiefly learned the same.

My principal authority and aid in this work was the most learned and reverend Abbot Albinus; who, educated in the Church of Canterbury by those venerable and learned men, Archbishop Theodore of blessed memory, and the Abbot Hadrian, transmitted to me by Nothelm, the pious priest of the Church of London, either in writing, or by word of mouth of the same Nothelm, all that he thought worthy of memory that had been done in the province of Kent, or the adjacent parts, by the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory, as he had learned the same either from written records, or the traditions of his predecessors. The same Nothelm, afterwards went to Rome, and having, with leave of the present Pope Gregory, searched into the archives of the Holy Roman Church, found there some epistles of the blessed Pope Gregory, and other popes; and, returning home, by the advice of the aforesaid most reverend father Albinus, brought them to me, to be inserted in my history. Thus, from the beginning of this volume to the time when the English nation received the faith of Christ, we have acquired matter from the writings of former men, gathered from various sources; but from that time till the present, what was transacted in the Church of Canterbury by the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory or their successors, and under what kings the same happened, has been conveyed to us, as we have said, by Nothelm through the industry of the aforesaid Abbot Albinus. They also partly informed me by what bishops and under what kings the provinces of the East and West Saxons, as also of the East Angles, and of the Northumbrians, received the

grace of the Gospel. In short, I was chiefly encouraged to undertake this work by the exhortations of the same Albinus. In like manner, Daniel, the most reverend Bishop of the West Saxons, who is still living, communicated to me in writing some things relating to the Ecclesiastical History of that province, and the adjoining one of the South Saxons, as also of the Isle of Wight. But how, by the ministry of those holy priests of Christ, Cedd and Ceadda, the province of the Mercians was brought to the faith of Christ, which they knew not before, and how that of the East Saxons recovered the faith after having rejected it, and how those fathers lived and died, we learned from the brethren of the monastery, which was built by them, and is called Laestingaeu. Further, what ecclesiastical matters took place in the province of the East Angles, was partly made known to us from the writings and tradition of former men, and partly by the account of the most reverend Abbot Esi. What was done with regard to the faith of Christ, and what was the episcopal succession in the province of Lindsey, we had either from the letters of the most reverend prelate Cynibert, or by word of mouth from other persons of good credit. But what was done in the Church in the different parts of the province of Northumbria from the time when they received the faith of Christ till this present, I received not on the authority of any one man, but by the faithful testimony of innumerable witnesses, who might know or remember the same; besides what I had of my own knowledge. Wherein it is to be observed, that what I have written concerning our most holy father, Bishop Cuthbert, either in this volume, or in my account of his life and actions, I partly took from what I found written of him by the brethren of the Church of Lindisfarne, accepting without reserve the statements I found there; but at the same time took care to add such things as I could myself have knowledge of by the faithful testimony of trustworthy informants. And I humbly entreat the reader, that if he shall find in these our writings anything not delivered according to the truth, he will not lay the blame of it on me, for, as the true rule of history requires, withholding nothing, I have laboured to commit to writing such things as I could gather from common report, for the instruction of posterity.

Moreover, I beseech all men who shall hear or read this history of our nation, that for my infirmities both of mind and body, they will offer up frequent intercessions to the throne of Grace. And I further pray, that in recompense for the labour wherewith I have recorded in the several provinces and more important places those events which I considered worthy of note and of interest to their inhabitants, I may for my reward have the benefit of their pious prayers.

Book I

Chap. I.

Of the Situation of Britain and Ireland, and of their ancient inhabitants.

Britain, an island in the Atlantic, formerly called Albion, lies to the north-west, facing, though at a considerable distance, the coasts of Germany, France, and Spain, which form the greatest part of Europe. It extends 800 miles in length towards the north, and is 200 miles in breadth, except where several promontories extend further in breadth, by which its compass is made to be 4,875 miles. To the south lies Belgic Gaul. To its nearest shore there is an easy passage from the city of Rutubi Portus, by the English now corrupted into Reptacaestir. The distance from here across the sea to Gessoriacum, the nearest shore in the territory of the Morini, is fifty miles, or as some writers say, 450 furlongs. On the other side of the island, where it opens upon the boundless ocean, it has the islands called Orcades. Britain is rich in grain and trees, and is well adapted for feeding cattle and beasts of burden. It also produces vines in some places, and has plenty of land and water fowl of divers sorts; it is remarkable also for rivers abounding in fish, and plentiful springs. It has the greatest plenty of salmon and eels; seals are also frequently taken, and dolphins, as also whales; besides many sorts of shell-fish, such as mussels, in which are often found excellent pearls of all colours, red, purple, violet and green, but chiefly white. There is also a great abundance of snails, of which the scarlet dye is made, a most beautiful red, which never fades with the heat of the sun or exposure to rain, but the older it is, the more beautiful it becomes. It has both salt and hot springs, and from them flow rivers which furnish hot baths, proper for all ages and both sexes, in separate places, according to their requirements. For water, as St. Basil says, receives the quality of heat, when it runs along certain metals, and becomes not only hot but scalding. Britain is rich also in veins of metals, as copper, iron, lead, and silver; it produces a great deal of excellent jet, which is black and sparkling, and burns when put to the fire, and when set on fire, drives away serpents; being warmed with rubbing, it attracts whatever is applied to it, like amber. The island was formerly distinguished by twenty-eight famous cities, besides innumerable forts, which were all strongly secured with walls, towers, gates, and bars. And, because it lies almost under the North Pole, the nights are light in summer, so that at midnight the beholders are often in doubt whether the evening twilight still continues, or that of the morning has come; since the sun at night returns to the east in the northern regions without passing far beneath the earth. For this reason the days are of a great length in summer, and on the other hand, the nights in winter are eighteen hours long, for the sun then withdraws into southern parts. In like manner the nights are very short in summer, and the days in winter, that is, only six equinoctial hours. Whereas, in Armenia, Macedonia, Italy, and other countries of the same latitude, the

longest day or night extends but to fifteen hours, and the shortest to nine.

There are in the island at present, following the number of the books in which the Divine Law was written, five languages of different nations employed in the study and confession of the one self-same knowledge, which is of highest truth and true sublimity, to wit, English, British, Scottish, Pictish, and Latin, the last having become common to all by the study of the Scriptures. But at first this island had no other inhabitants but the Britons, from whom it derived its name, and who, coming over into Britain, as is reported, from Armorica, possessed themselves of the southern parts thereof. Starting from the south, they had occupied the greater part of the island, when it happened, that the nation of the Picts, putting to sea from Scythia, as is reported, in a few ships of war, and being driven by the winds beyond the bounds of Britain, came to Ireland and landed on its northern shores. There, finding the nation of the Scots, they begged to be allowed to settle among them, but could not succeed in obtaining their request. Ireland is the largest island next to Britain, and lies to the west of it; but as it is shorter than Britain to the north, so, on the other hand, it runs out far beyond it to the south, over against the northern part of Spain, though a wide sea lies between them. The Picts then, as has been said, arriving in this island by sea, desired to have a place granted them in which they might settle. The Scots answered that the island could not contain them both; but “We can give you good counsel,” said they, “whereby you may know what to do; we know there is another island, not far from ours, to the eastward, which we often see at a distance, when the days are clear. If you will go thither, you can obtain settlements; or, if any should oppose you, we will help you.” The Picts, accordingly, sailing over into Britain, began to inhabit the northern parts thereof, for the Britons had possessed themselves of the southern. Now the Picts had no wives, and asked them of the Scots; who would not consent to grant them upon any other terms, than that when any question should arise, they should choose a king from the female royal race rather than from the male: which custom, as is well known, has been observed among the Picts to this day. In process of time, Britain, besides the Britons and the Picts, received a third nation, the Scots, who, migrating from Ireland under their leader, Reuda, either by fair means, or by force of arms, secured to themselves those settlements among the Picts which they still possess. From the name of their commander, they are to this day called Dalreudini; for, in their language, Dal signifies a part.

Ireland is broader than Britain and has a much healthier and milder climate; for the snow scarcely ever lies there above three days: no man makes hay in the summer for winter’s provision, or builds stables for his beasts of burden. No reptiles are found there, and no snake can live there; for, though snakes are often carried thither out of Britain, as soon as the ship comes near the shore, and the scent of the air reaches them, they die. On the contrary, almost all things in the island are efficacious against poison. In truth, we have known that when men have been bitten by serpents, the scrapings of leaves of

books that were brought out of Ireland, being put into water, and given them to drink, have immediately absorbed the spreading poison, and assuaged the swelling.

The island abounds in milk and honey, nor is there any lack of vines, fish, or fowl; and it is noted for the hunting of stags and roe-deer. It is properly the country of the Scots, who, migrating from thence, as has been said, formed the third nation in Britain in addition to the Britons and the Picts.

There is a very large gulf of the sea, which formerly divided the nation of the Britons from the Picts; it runs from the west far into the land, where, to this day, stands a strong city of the Britons, called Alcluith. The Scots, arriving on the north side of this bay, settled themselves there.

Chap. II.

How Caius Julius Caesar was the first Roman that came into Britain.

Now Britain had never been visited by the Romans, and was entirely unknown to them before the time of Caius Julius Caesar, who, in the year 693 after the foundation of Rome, but the sixtieth year before the Incarnation of our Lord, was consul with Lucius Bibulus. While he was making war upon the Germans and the Gauls, who were divided only by the river Rhine, he came into the province of the Morini, whence is the nearest and shortest passage into Britain. Here, having provided about eighty ships of burden and fast-sailing vessels, he sailed over into Britain; where, being first roughly handled in a battle, and then caught in a storm, he lost a considerable part of his fleet, no small number of foot-soldiers, and almost all his cavalry. Returning into Gaul, he put his legions into winter-quarters, and gave orders for building six hundred sail of both sorts. With these he again crossed over early in spring into Britain, but, whilst he was marching with the army against the enemy, the ships, riding at anchor, were caught in a storm and either dashed one against another, or driven upon the sands and wrecked. Forty of them were lost, the rest were, with much difficulty, repaired. Caesar's cavalry was, at the first encounter, defeated by the Britons, and there Labienus, the tribune, was slain. In the second engagement, with great hazard to his men, he defeated the Britons and put them to flight. Thence he proceeded to the river Thames, where a great multitude of the enemy had posted themselves on the farther side of the river, under the command of Cassobellaunus, and fenced the bank of the river and almost all the ford under water with sharp stakes: the remains of these are to be seen to this day, apparently about the thickness of a man's thigh, cased with lead, and fixed immovably in the bottom of the river. This being perceived and avoided by the Romans, the barbarians, not able to stand the charge of the legions, hid themselves in the woods, whence they grievously harassed the Romans with repeated sallies. In the meantime, the strong state of the Trinovantes, with their commander Androgius, surrendered to Caesar, giving him forty hostages. Many other cities, following their example, made a treaty with the Romans. Guided by them, Caesar at length, after severe fighting, took the town of Cassobellaunus, situated between two marshes, fortified by sheltering woods, and plentifully furnished with all necessaries. After this, Caesar returned from Britain into Gaul, but he had no sooner put his legions into winter quarters, than he was suddenly beset and distracted with wars and sudden risings on every side.

Chap. III.

How Claudius, the second of the Romans who came into Britain, brought the islands Orcades into subjection to the Roman empire; and Vespasian, sent by him, reduced the Isle of Wight under the dominion of the Romans.

In the year of Rome 798, Claudius, fourth emperor from Augustus, being desirous to approve himself a prince beneficial to the republic, and eagerly bent upon war and conquest on every side, undertook an expedition into Britain, which as it appeared, was roused to rebellion by the refusal of the Romans to give up certain deserters. No one before or after Julius Caesar had dared to land upon the island. Claudius crossed over to it, and within a very few days, without any fighting or bloodshed, the greater part of the island was surrendered into his hands. He also added to the Roman empire the Orcades, which lie in the ocean beyond Britain, and, returning to Rome in the sixth month after his departure, he gave his son the title of Britannicus. This war he concluded in the fourth year of his reign, which is the forty-sixth from the Incarnation of our Lord. In which year there came to pass a most grievous famine in Syria, which is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles to have been foretold by the prophet Agabus.

Vespasian, who was emperor after Nero, being sent into Britain by the same Claudius, brought also under the Roman dominion the Isle of Wight, which is close to Britain on the south, and is about thirty miles in length from east to west, and twelve from north to south; being six miles distant from the southern coast of Britain at the east end, and three at the west. Nero, succeeding Claudius in the empire, undertook no wars at all; and, therefore, among countless other disasters brought by him upon the Roman state, he almost lost Britain; for in his time two most notable towns were there taken and destroyed.

Chap. IV.

How Lucius, king of Britain, writing to Pope Eleutherus, desired to be made a Christian.

In the year of our Lord 156, Marcus Antoninus Verus, the fourteenth from Augustus, was made emperor, together with his brother, Aurelius Commodus. In their time, whilst the holy Eleutherus presided over the Roman Church, Lucius, king of Britain, sent a letter to him, entreating that by a mandate from him he might be made a Christian. He soon obtained his pious request, and the Britons preserved the faith, which they had received, uncorrupted and entire, in peace and tranquillity until the time of the Emperor Diocletian.

Chap. V.

How the Emperor Severus divided from the rest by a rampart that part of Britain which had been recovered.

In the year of our Lord 189, Severus, an African, born at Leptis, in the province of Tripolis, became emperor. He was the seventeenth from Augustus, and reigned seventeen years. Being naturally of a harsh disposition, and engaged in many wars, he governed the state vigorously, but with much trouble. Having been victorious in all the grievous civil wars which happened in his time, he was drawn into Britain by the revolt of almost all the confederated tribes; and, after many great and severe battles, he thought fit to divide that part of the island, which he had recovered, from the other unconquered nations, not with a wall, as some imagine, but with a rampart. For a wall is made of stones, but a rampart, with which camps are fortified to repel the assaults of enemies, is made of sods, cut out of the earth, and raised high above the ground, like a wall, having in front of it the trench whence the sods were taken, with strong stakes of wood fixed above it. Thus Severus drew a great trench and strong rampart, fortified with several towers, from sea to sea. And there, at York, he fell sick afterwards and died, leaving two sons, Bassianus and Geta; of whom Geta died, adjudged an enemy of the State; but Bassianus, having taken the surname of Antonius, obtained the empire.

Chap. VI.

Of the reign of Diocletian, and how he persecuted the Christians.

In the year of our Lord 286, Diocletian, the thirty-third from Augustus, and chosen emperor by the army, reigned twenty years, and created Maximian, surnamed Herculus, his colleague in the empire. In their time, one Carausius, of very mean birth, but a man of great ability and energy, being appointed to guard the sea-coasts, then infested by the Franks and Saxons, acted more to the prejudice than to the advantage of the commonwealth, by not restoring to its owners any of the booty taken from the robbers, but keeping all to himself; thus giving rise to the suspicion that by intentional neglect he suffered the enemy to infest the frontiers. When, therefore, an order was sent by Maximian that he should be put to death, he took upon him the imperial purple, and possessed himself of Britain, and having most valiantly conquered and held it for the space of seven years, he was at length put to death by the treachery of his associate Allectus. The usurper, having thus got the island from Carausius, held it three years, and was then vanquished by Asclepiodotus, the captain of the Praetorian guards, who thus at the end of ten years restored Britain to the Roman empire.

Meanwhile, Diocletian in the east, and Maximian Herculus in the west, commanded the churches to be destroyed, and the Christians to be persecuted and slain. This persecution was the tenth since the reign of Nero, and was more lasting and cruel than almost any before it; for it was carried on incessantly for the space of ten years, with burning of churches, proscription of innocent persons, and the slaughter of martyrs. Finally, Britain also attained to the great glory of bearing faithful witness to God.

Chap. VII.

The Passion of St. Alban and his companions, who at that time shed their blood for our Lord.

At that time suffered St. Alban, of whom the priest Fortunatus, in the Praise of Virgins, where he makes mention of the blessed martyrs that came to the Lord from all parts of the world, says:

And fruitful Britain noble Alban rears.

This Alban, being yet a pagan, at the time when at the bidding of unbelieving rulers all manner of cruelty was practised against the Christians, gave entertainment in his house to a certain clerk, flying from his persecutors. This man he observed to be engaged in continual prayer and watching day and night; when on a sudden the Divine grace shining on him, he began to imitate the example of faith and piety which was set before him, and being gradually instructed by his wholesome admonitions, he cast off the darkness of idolatry, and became a Christian in all sincerity of heart. The aforesaid clerk having been some days entertained by him, it came to the ears of the impious prince, that a confessor of Christ, to whom a martyr's place had not yet been assigned, was concealed at Alban's house. Whereupon he sent some soldiers to make a strict search after him. When they came to the martyr's hut, St. Alban presently came forth to the soldiers, instead of his guest and master, in the habit or long coat which he wore, and was bound and led before the judge.

It happened that the judge, at the time when Alban was carried before him, was standing at the altar, and offering sacrifice to devils. When he saw Alban, being much enraged that he should thus, of his own accord, dare to put himself into the hands of the soldiers, and incur such danger on behalf of the guest whom he had harboured, he commanded him to be dragged to the images of the devils, before which he stood, saying, "Because you have chosen to conceal a rebellious and sacrilegious man, rather than to deliver him up to the soldiers, that his contempt of the gods might meet with the penalty due to such blasphemy, you shall undergo all the punishment that was due to him, if you seek to abandon the worship of our religion." But St. Alban, who had voluntarily declared himself a Christian to the persecutors of the faith, was not at all daunted by the prince's threats, but putting on the armour of spiritual warfare, publicly declared that he would not obey his command. Then said the judge, "Of what family or race are you?"— "What does it concern you," answered Alban, "of what stock I am? If you desire to hear the truth of my religion, be it known to you, that I am now a Christian, and free to fulfil Christian duties."— "I ask your name," said the judge; "tell me it immediately."— "I am called Alban by my parents," replied he; "and I worship ever and adore the true and living God, Who created all things." Then the judge, filled with anger, said, "If you would enjoy the happiness of eternal

life, do not delay to offer sacrifice to the great gods.” Alban rejoined, “These sacrifices, which by you are offered to devils, neither can avail the worshippers, nor fulfil the desires and petitions of the suppliants. Rather, whosoever shall offer sacrifice to these images, shall receive the everlasting pains of hell for his reward.”

The judge, hearing these words, and being much incensed, ordered this holy confessor of God to be scourged by the executioners, believing that he might by stripes shake that constancy of heart, on which he could not prevail by words. He, being most cruelly tortured, bore the same patiently, or rather joyfully, for our Lord’s sake. When the judge perceived that he was not to be overcome by tortures, or withdrawn from the exercise of the Christian religion, he ordered him to be put to death. Being led to execution, he came to a river, which, with a most rapid course, ran between the wall of the town and the arena where he was to be executed. He there saw a great multitude of persons of both sexes, and of divers ages and conditions, who were doubtless assembled by Divine inspiration, to attend the blessed confessor and martyr, and had so filled the bridge over the river, that he could scarce pass over that evening. In truth, almost all had gone out, so that the judge remained in the city without attendance. St. Alban, therefore, urged by an ardent and devout wish to attain the sooner to martyrdom, drew near to the stream, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, whereupon the channel was immediately dried up, and he perceived that the water had given place and made way for him to pass. Among the rest, the executioner, who should have put him to death, observed this, and moved doubtless by Divine inspiration hastened to meet him at the appointed place of execution, and casting away the sword which he had carried ready drawn, fell at his feet, praying earnestly that he might rather be accounted worthy to suffer with the martyr, whom he was ordered to execute, or, if possible, instead of him.

Whilst he was thus changed from a persecutor into a companion in the faith and truth, and the other executioners rightly hesitated to take up the sword which was lying on the ground, the holy confessor, accompanied by the multitude, ascended a hill, about half a mile from the arena, beautiful, as was fitting, and of most pleasing appearance, adorned, or rather clothed, everywhere with flowers of many colours, nowhere steep or precipitous or of sheer descent, but with a long, smooth natural slope, like a plain, on its sides, a place altogether worthy from of old, by reason of its native beauty, to be consecrated by the blood of a blessed martyr. On the top of this hill, St. Alban prayed that God would give him water, and immediately a living spring, confined in its channel, sprang up at his feet, so that all men acknowledged that even the stream had yielded its service to the martyr. For it was impossible that the martyr, who had left no water remaining in the river, should desire it on the top of the hill, unless he thought it fitting. The river then having done service and fulfilled the pious duty, returned to its natural course, leaving a testimony of its obedience. Here, therefore, the head of the

undaunted martyr was struck off, and here he received the crown of life, which God has promised to them that love him. But he who laid impious hands on the holy man's neck was not permitted to rejoice over his dead body; for his eyes dropped upon the ground at the same moment as the blessed martyr's head fell.

At the same time was also beheaded the soldier, who before, through the Divine admonition, refused to strike the holy confessor. Of whom it is apparent, that though he was not purified by the waters of baptism, yet he was cleansed by the washing of his own blood, and rendered worthy to enter the kingdom of heaven. Then the judge, astonished at the unwonted sight of so many heavenly miracles, ordered the persecution to cease immediately, and began to honour the death of the saints, by which he once thought that they might have been turned from their zeal for the Christian faith. The blessed Alban suffered death on the twenty-second day of June, near the city of Verulam, which is now by the English nation called Verlamacaestir, or Vaeclingacaestir, where afterwards, when peaceable Christian times were restored, a church of wonderful workmanship, and altogether worthy to commemorate his martyrdom, was erected. In which place the cure of sick persons and the frequent working of wonders cease not to this day.

At that time suffered Aaron and Julius, citizens of the City of Legions, and many more of both sexes in divers places; who, after that they had endured sundry torments, and their limbs had been mangled after an unheard-of manner, when their warfare was accomplished, yielded their souls up to the joys of the heavenly city.

Chap. VIII.

How, when the persecution ceased, the Church in Britain enjoyed peace till the time of the Arian heresy.

When the storm of persecution ceased, the faithful Christians, who, during the time of danger, had hidden themselves in woods and deserts and secret caves, came forth and rebuilt the churches which had been levelled to the ground; founded, erected, and finished the cathedrals raised in honour of the holy martyrs, and, as if displaying their conquering standards in all places, celebrated festivals and performed their sacred rites with pure hearts and lips. This peace continued in the Christian churches of Britain until the time of the Arian madness, which, having corrupted the whole world, infected this island also, so far removed from the rest of the world, with the poison of its error; and when once a way was opened across the sea for that plague, straightway all the taint of every heresy fell upon the island, ever desirous to hear some new thing, and never holding firm to any sure belief.

At this time Constantius, who, whilst Diocletian was alive, governed Gaul and Spain, a man of great clemency and urbanity, died in Britain. This man left his son Constantine, born of Helena, his concubine, emperor of the Gauls. Eutropius writes that Constantine, being created emperor in Britain, succeeded his father in the sovereignty. In his time the Arian heresy broke out, and although it was exposed and condemned in the Council of Nicaea, nevertheless, the deadly poison of its evil spread, as has been said, to the Churches in the islands, as well as to those of the rest of the world.

Chap. IX.

How during the reign of Gratian, Maximus, being created Emperor in Britain, returned into Gaul with a mighty army.

In the year of our Lord 377, Gratian, the fortieth from Augustus, held the empire for six years after the death of Valens; though he had long before reigned with his uncle Valens, and his brother Valentinian. Finding the condition of the commonwealth much impaired, and almost gone to ruin, and impelled by the necessity of restoring it, he invested the Spaniard, Theodosius, with the purple at Sirmium, and made him emperor of Thrace and the Eastern provinces. At that time, Maximus, a man of energy and probity, and worthy of the title of Augustus, if he had not broken his oath of allegiance, was made emperor by the army somewhat against his will, passed over into Gaul, and there by treachery slew the Emperor Gratian, who in consternation at his sudden invasion, was attempting to escape into Italy. His brother, the Emperor Valentinian, expelled from Italy, fled into the East, where he was entertained by Theodosius with fatherly affection, and soon restored to the empire, for Maximus the tyrant, being shut up in Aquileia, was there taken by them and put to death.

Chap. X.

How, in the reign of Arcadius, Pelagius, a Briton, insolently impugned the Grace of God.

In the year of our Lord 394, Arcadius, the son of Theodosius, the forty-third from Augustus, succeeding to the empire, with his brother Honorius, held it thirteen years. In his time, Pelagius, a Briton, spread far and near the infection of his perfidious doctrine, denying the assistance of the Divine grace, being seconded therein by his associate Julianus of Campania, who was impelled by an uncontrolled desire to recover his bishopric, of which he had been deprived. St. Augustine, and the other orthodox fathers, quoted many thousand catholic authorities against them, but failed to amend their folly; nay, more, their madness being rebuked was rather increased by contradiction than suffered by them to be purified through adherence to the truth; which Prosper, the rhetorician, has beautifully expressed thus in heroic verse: —

They tell that one, erewhile consumed with gnawing spite, snake-like attacked Augustine in his writings. Who urged the wretched viper to raise from the ground his head, howsoever hidden in dens of darkness? Either the sea-girt Britons reared him with the fruit of their soil, or fed on Campanian pastures his heart swells with pride.

Chap. XI.

How during the reign of Honorius, Gratian and Constantine were created tyrants in Britain; and soon after the former was slain in Britain, and the latter in Gaul.

In the year of our Lord 407, Honorius, the younger son of Theodosius, and the forty-fourth from Augustus, being emperor, two years before the invasion of Rome by Alaric, king of the Goths, when the nations of the Alani, Suevi, Vandals, and many others with them, having defeated the Franks and passed the Rhine, ravaged all Gaul, Gratianus, a citizen of the country, was set up as tyrant in Britain and killed. In his place, Constantine, one of the meanest soldiers, only for the hope afforded by his name, and without any worth to recommend him, was chosen emperor. As soon as he had taken upon him the command, he crossed over into Gaul, where being often imposed upon by the barbarians with untrustworthy treaties, he did more harm than good to the Commonwealth. Whereupon Count Constantius, by the command of Honorius, marching into Gaul with an army, besieged him in the city of Arles, took him prisoner, and put him to death. His son Constans, a monk, whom he had created Caesar, was also put to death by his own follower Count Gerontius, at Vienne.

Rome was taken by the Goths, in the year from its foundation, 1164. Then the Romans ceased to rule in Britain, almost 470 years after Caius Julius Caesar came to the island. They dwelt within the rampart, which, as we have mentioned, Severus made across the island, on the south side of it, as the cities, watch-towers, bridges, and paved roads there made testify to this day; but they had a right of dominion over the farther parts of Britain, as also over the islands that are beyond Britain.

Chap. XII.

How the Britons, being ravaged by the Scots and Picts, sought succour from the Romans, who coming a second time, built a wall across the island; but when this was broken down at once by the aforesaid enemies, they were reduced to greater distress than before.

From that time, the British part of Britain, destitute of armed soldiers, of all military stores, and of the whole flower of its active youth, who had been led away by the rashness of the tyrants never to return, was wholly exposed to rapine, the people being altogether ignorant of the use of weapons. Whereupon they suffered many years from the sudden invasions of two very savage nations from beyond the sea, the Scots from the west, and the Picts from the north. We call these nations from beyond the sea, not on account of their being seated out of Britain, but because they were separated from that part of it which was possessed by the Britons, two broad and long inlets of the sea lying between them, one of which runs into the interior of Britain, from the Eastern Sea, and the other from the Western, though they do not reach so far as to touch one another. The eastern has in the midst of it the city Giudi. On the Western Sea, that is, on its right shore, stands the city of Alcluith, which in their language signifies the Rock Cluith, for it is close by the river of that name.

On account of the attacks of these nations, the Britons sent messengers to Rome with letters piteously praying for succour, and promising perpetual subjection, provided that the impending enemy should be driven away. An armed legion was immediately sent them, which, arriving in the island, and engaging the enemy, slew a great multitude of them, drove the rest out of the territories of their allies, and having in the meanwhile delivered them from their worst distress, advised them to build a wall between the two seas across the island, that it might secure them by keeping off the enemy. So they returned home with great triumph. But the islanders building the wall which they had been told to raise, not of stone, since they had no workmen capable of such a work, but of sods, made it of no use. Nevertheless, they carried it for many miles between the two bays or inlets of the sea of which we have spoken; to the end that where the protection of the water was wanting, they might use the rampart to defend their borders from the irruptions of the enemies. Of the work there erected, that is, of a rampart of great breadth and height, there are evident remains to be seen at this day. It begins at about two miles' distance from the monastery of Aebbercurnig, west of it, at a place called in the Pictish language Peanfahel, but in the English tongue, Penneltun, and running westward, ends near the city of Alcluith.

But the former enemies, when they perceived that the Roman soldiers were gone, immediately coming by sea, broke into the borders, trampled and

overran all places, and like men mowing ripe corn, bore down all before them. Hereupon messengers were again sent to Rome miserably imploring aid, lest their wretched country should be utterly blotted out, and the name of a Roman province, so long renowned among them, overthrown by the cruelties of foreign races, might become utterly contemptible. A legion was accordingly sent again, and, arriving unexpectedly in autumn, made great slaughter of the enemy, obliging all those that could escape, to flee beyond the sea; whereas before, they were wont yearly to carry off their booty without any opposition. Then the Romans declared to the Britons, that they could not for the future undertake such troublesome expeditions for their sake, and advised them rather to take up arms and make an effort to engage their enemies, who could not prove too powerful for them, unless they themselves were enervated by cowardice. Moreover, thinking that it might be some help to the allies, whom they were forced to abandon, they constructed a strong stone wall from sea to sea, in a straight line between the towns that had been there built for fear of the enemy, where Severus also had formerly built a rampart. This famous wall, which is still to be seen, was raised at public and private expense, the Britons also lending their assistance. It is eight feet in breadth, and twelve in height, in a straight line from east to west, as is still evident to beholders. This being presently finished, they gave the dispirited people good advice, and showed them how to furnish themselves with arms. Besides, they built towers to command a view of the sea, at intervals, on the southern coast, where their ships lay, because there also the invasions of the barbarians were apprehended, and so took leave of their allies, never to return again.

After their departure to their own country, the Scots and Picts, understanding that they had refused to return, at once came back, and growing more confident than they had been before, occupied all the northern and farthest part of the island, driving out the natives, as far as the wall. Hereupon a timorous guard was placed upon the fortification, where, dazed with fear, they became ever more dispirited day by day. On the other side, the enemy constantly attacked them with barbed weapons, by which the cowardly defenders were dragged in piteous fashion from the wall, and dashed against the ground. At last, the Britons, forsaking their cities and wall, took to flight and were scattered. The enemy pursued, and forthwith followed a massacre more grievous than ever before; for the wretched natives were torn in pieces by their enemies, as lambs are torn by wild beasts. Thus, being expelled from their dwellings and lands, they saved themselves from the immediate danger of starvation by robbing and plundering one another, adding to the calamities inflicted by the enemy their own domestic broils, till the whole country was left destitute of food except such as could be procured in the chase.

Chap. XIII.

How in the reign of Theodosius the younger, in whose time Palladius was sent to the Scots that believed in Christ, the Britons begging assistance of Ætius, the consul, could not obtain it. [446 a.d.]

In the year of our Lord 423, Theodosius, the younger, the forty-fifth from Augustus, succeeded Honorius and governed the Roman empire twenty-six years. In the eighth year of his reign, Palladius was sent by Celestinus, the Roman pontiff, to the Scots that believed in Christ, to be their first bishop. In the twenty-third year of his reign, Aetius, a man of note and a patrician, discharged his third consulship with Symmachus for his colleague. To him the wretched remnant of the Britons sent a letter, which began thus:— “To Aetius, thrice Consul, the groans of the Britons.” And in the sequel of the letter they thus unfolded their woes:— “The barbarians drive us to the sea; the sea drives us back to the barbarians: between them we are exposed to two sorts of death; we are either slaughtered or drowned.” Yet, for all this, they could not obtain any help from him, as he was then engaged in most serious wars with Bledla and Attila, kings of the Huns. And though the year before this Bledla had been murdered by the treachery of his own brother Attila, yet Attila himself remained so intolerable an enemy to the Republic, that he ravaged almost all Europe, attacking and destroying cities and castles. At the same time there was a famine at Constantinople, and soon after a plague followed; moreover, a great part of the wall of that city, with fifty-seven towers, fell to the ground. Many cities also went to ruin, and the famine and pestilential state of the air destroyed thousands of men and cattle.

Chap. XIV.

How the Britons, compelled by the great famine, drove the barbarians out of their territories; and soon after there ensued, along with abundance of corn, decay of morals, pestilence, and the downfall of the nation.

In the meantime, the aforesaid famine distressing the Britons more and more, and leaving to posterity a lasting memory of its mischievous effects, obliged many of them to submit themselves to the depredators; though others still held out, putting their trust in God, when human help failed. These continually made raids from the mountains, caves, and woods, and, at length, began to inflict severe losses on their enemies, who had been for so many years plundering the country. The bold Irish robbers thereupon returned home, intending to come again before long. The Picts then settled down in the farthest part of the island and afterwards remained there, but they did not fail to plunder and harass the Britons from time to time.

Now, when the ravages of the enemy at length abated, the island began to abound with such plenty of grain as had never been known in any age before; along with plenty, evil living increased, and this was immediately attended by the taint of all manner of crime; in particular, cruelty, hatred of truth, and love of falsehood; insomuch, that if any one among them happened to be milder than the rest, and more inclined to truth, all the rest abhorred and persecuted him unrestrainedly, as if he had been the enemy of Britain. Nor were the laity only guilty of these things, but even our Lord's own flock, with its shepherds, casting off the easy yoke of Christ, gave themselves up to drunkenness, enmity, quarrels, strife, envy, and other such sins. In the meantime, on a sudden, a grievous plague fell upon that corrupt generation, which soon destroyed such numbers of them, that the living scarcely availed to bury the dead: yet, those that survived, could not be recalled from the spiritual death, which they had incurred through their sins, either by the death of their friends, or the fear of death. Whereupon, not long after, a more severe vengeance for their fearful crimes fell upon the sinful nation. They held a council to determine what was to be done, and where they should seek help to prevent or repel the cruel and frequent incursions of the northern nations; and in concert with their King Vortigern, it was unanimously decided to call the Saxons to their aid from beyond the sea, which, as the event plainly showed, was brought about by the Lord's will, that evil might fall upon them for their wicked deeds.

Chap. XV.

How the Angles, being invited into Britain, at first drove off the enemy; but not long after, making a league with them, turned their weapons against their allies.

In the year of our Lord 449, Marcian, the forty-sixth from Augustus, being made emperor with Valentinian, ruled the empire seven years. Then the nation of the Angles, or Saxons, being invited by the aforesaid king, arrived in Britain with three ships of war and had a place in which to settle assigned to them by the same king, in the eastern part of the island, on the pretext of fighting in defence of their country, whilst their real intentions were to conquer it. Accordingly they engaged with the enemy, who were come from the north to give battle, and the Saxons obtained the victory. When the news of their success and of the fertility of the country, and the cowardice of the Britons, reached their own home, a more considerable fleet was quickly sent over, bringing a greater number of men, and these, being added to the former army, made up an invincible force. The newcomers received of the Britons a place to inhabit among them, upon condition that they should wage war against their enemies for the peace and security of the country, whilst the Britons agreed to furnish them with pay. Those who came over were of the three most powerful nations of Germany — Saxons, Angles, and Jutes. From the Jutes are descended the people of Kent, and of the Isle of Wight, including those in the province of the West-Saxons who are to this day called Jutes, seated opposite to the Isle of Wight. From the Saxons, that is, the country which is now called Old Saxony, came the East-Saxons, the South-Saxons, and the West-Saxons. From the Angles, that is, the country which is called Angulus, and which is said, from that time, to have remained desert to this day, between the provinces of the Jutes and the Saxons, are descended the East-Angles, the Midland-Angles, the Mercians, all the race of the Northumbrians, that is, of those nations that dwell on the north side of the river Humber, and the other nations of the Angles. The first commanders are said to have been the two brothers Hengist and Horsa. Of these Horsa was afterwards slain in battle by the Britons, and a monument, bearing his name, is still in existence in the eastern parts of Kent. They were the sons of Victgilsus, whose father was Vitta, son of Vecta, son of Woden; from whose stock the royal race of many provinces trace their descent. In a short time, swarms of the aforesaid nations came over into the island, and the foreigners began to increase so much, that they became a source of terror to the natives themselves who had invited them. Then, having on a sudden entered into league with the Picts, whom they had by this time repelled by force of arms, they began to turn their weapons against their allies. At first, they obliged them to furnish a greater quantity of provisions; and, seeking an occasion of

quarrel, protested, that unless more plentiful supplies were brought them, they would break the league, and ravage all the island; nor were they backward in putting their threats into execution. In short, the fire kindled by the hands of the pagans, proved God's just vengeance for the crimes of the people; not unlike that which, being of old lighted by the Chaldeans, consumed the walls and all the buildings of Jerusalem. For here, too, through the agency of the pitiless conqueror, yet by the disposal of the just Judge, it ravaged all the neighbouring cities and country, spread the conflagration from the eastern to the western sea, without any opposition, and overran the whole face of the doomed island. Public as well as private buildings were overturned; the priests were everywhere slain before the altars; no respect was shown for office, the prelates with the people were destroyed with fire and sword; nor were there any left to bury those who had been thus cruelly slaughtered. Some of the miserable remnant, being taken in the mountains, were butchered in heaps. Others, spent with hunger, came forth and submitted themselves to the enemy, to undergo for the sake of food perpetual servitude, if they were not killed upon the spot. Some, with sorrowful hearts, fled beyond the seas. Others, remaining in their own country, led a miserable life of terror and anxiety of mind among the mountains, woods and crags.

Chap. XVI.

How the Britons obtained their first victory over the Angles, under the command of Ambrosius, a Roman.

When the army of the enemy, having destroyed and dispersed the natives, had returned home to their own settlements, the Britons began by degrees to take heart, and gather strength, sallying out of the lurking places where they had concealed themselves, and with one accord imploring the Divine help, that they might not utterly be destroyed. They had at that time for their leader, Ambrosius Aurelianus, a man of worth, who alone, by chance, of the Roman nation had survived the storm, in which his parents, who were of the royal race, had perished. Under him the Britons revived, and offering battle to the victors, by the help of God, gained the victory. From that day, sometimes the natives, and sometimes their enemies, prevailed, till the year of the siege of Badon-hill, when they made no small slaughter of those enemies, about forty-four years after their arrival in England. But of this hereafter.

Chap. XVII.

How Germanus the Bishop, sailing into Britain with Lupus, first quelled the tempest of the sea, and afterwards that of the Pelagians, by Divine power. [429 a.d.]

Some few years before their arrival, the Pelagian heresy, brought over by Agricola, the son of Severianus, a Pelagian bishop, had corrupted with its foul taint the faith of the Britons. But whereas they absolutely refused to embrace that perverse doctrine, and blaspheme the grace of Christ, yet were not able of themselves to confute the subtilty of the unholy belief by force of argument, they bethought them of wholesome counsels and determined to crave aid of the Gallican prelates in that spiritual warfare. Hereupon, these, having assembled a great synod, consulted together to determine what persons should be sent thither to sustain the faith, and by unanimous consent, choice was made of the apostolic prelates, Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, and Lupus of Troyes, to go into Britain to confirm the people's faith in the grace of God. With ready zeal they complied with the request and commands of the Holy Church, and put to sea. The ship sped safely with favouring winds till they were halfway between the coast of Gaul and Britain. There on a sudden they were obstructed by the malevolence of demons, who were jealous that men of such eminence and piety should be sent to bring back the people to salvation. They raised storms, and darkened the sky with clouds. The sails could not support the fury of the winds, the sailors' skill was forced to give way, the ship was sustained by prayer, not by strength, and as it happened, their spiritual leader and bishop, being spent with weariness, had fallen asleep. Then, as if because resistance flagged, the tempest gathered strength, and the ship, overwhelmed by the waves, was ready to sink. Then the blessed Lupus and all the rest, greatly troubled, awakened their elder, that he might oppose the raging elements. He, showing himself the more resolute in proportion to the greatness of the danger, called upon Christ, and having, in the name of the Holy Trinity, taken and sprinkled a little water, quelled the raging waves, admonished his companion, encouraged all, and all with one consent uplifted their voices in prayer. Divine help was granted, the enemies were put to flight, a cloudless calm ensued, the winds veering about set themselves again to forward their voyage, the sea was soon traversed, and they reached the quiet of the wished-for shore. A multitude flocking thither from all parts, received the bishops, whose coming had been foretold by the predictions even of their adversaries. For the evil spirits declared their fear, and when the bishops expelled them from the bodies of the possessed, they made known the nature of the tempest, and the dangers they had occasioned, and confessed that they had been overcome by the merits and authority of these men.

In the meantime the bishops speedily filled the island of Britain with the

fame of their preaching and miracles; and the Word of God was by them daily preached, not only in the churches, but even in the streets and fields, so that the faithful and Catholic were everywhere confirmed, and those who had been perverted accepted the way of amendment. Like the Apostles, they acquired honour and authority through a good conscience, learning through the study of letters, and the power of working miracles through their merits. Thus the whole country readily came over to their way of thinking; the authors of the erroneous belief kept themselves in hiding, and, like evil spirits, grieved for the loss of the people that were rescued from them. At length, after long deliberation, they had the boldness to enter the lists. They came forward in all the splendour of their wealth, with gorgeous apparel, and supported by a numerous following; choosing rather to hazard the contest, than to undergo among the people whom they had led astray, the reproach of having been silenced, lest they should seem by saying nothing to condemn themselves. An immense multitude had been attracted thither with their wives and children. The people were present as spectators and judges; the two parties stood there in very different case; on the one side was Divine faith, on the other human presumption; on the one side piety, on the other pride; on the one side Pelagius, the founder of their faith, on the other Christ. The blessed bishops permitted their adversaries to speak first, and their empty speech long took up the time and filled the ears with meaningless words. Then the venerable prelates poured forth the torrent of their eloquence and showered upon them the words of Apostles and Evangelists, mingling the Scriptures with their own discourse and supporting their strongest assertions by the testimony of the written Word. Vainglory was vanquished and unbelief refuted; and the heretics, at every argument put before them, not being able to reply, confessed their errors. The people, giving judgement, could scarce refrain from violence, and signified their verdict by their acclamations.

Chap. XVIII.

How the some holy man gave sight to the blind daughter of a tribune, and then coming to St. Alban, there received of his relics, and left other relics of the blessed Apostles and other martyrs. [429 a.d.]

After this, a certain man, who held the office of tribune, came forward with his wife, and brought his blind daughter, a child of ten years of age, to be healed of the bishops. They ordered her to be brought to their adversaries, who, being rebuked by their own conscience, joined their entreaties to those of the child's parents, and besought the bishops that she might be healed. They, therefore, perceiving their adversaries to yield, poured forth a short prayer, and then Germanus, full of the Holy Ghost, invoking the Trinity, at once drew from his side a casket which hung about his neck, containing relics of the saints, and, taking it in his hands, applied it in the sight of all to the girl's eyes, which were immediately delivered from darkness and filled with the light of truth. The parents rejoiced, and the people were filled with awe at the miracle; and after that day, the heretical beliefs were so fully obliterated from the minds of all, that they thirsted for and sought after the doctrine of the bishops.

This damnable heresy being thus suppressed, and the authors thereof confuted, and all the people settled in the purity of the faith, the bishops went to the tomb of the martyr, the blessed Alban, to give thanks to God through him. There Germanus, having with him relics of all the Apostles, and of divers martyrs, after offering up his prayers, commanded the tomb to be opened, that he might lay therein the precious gifts; judging it fitting, that the limbs of saints brought together from divers countries, as their equal merits had procured them admission into heaven, should find shelter in one tomb. These being honourably bestowed, and laid together, he took up a handful of dust from the place where the blessed martyr's blood had been shed, to carry away with him. In this dust the blood had been preserved, showing that the slaughter of the martyrs was red, though the persecutor was pale in death. In consequence of these things, an innumerable multitude of people was that day converted to the Lord.

Chap. XIX.

How the same holy man, being detained there by sickness, by his prayers quenched a fire that had broken out among the houses, and was himself cured of his infirmity by a vision. [429 a.d.]

As they were returning thence, the treacherous enemy, having, as it chanced, prepared a snare, caused Germanus to bruise his foot by a fall, not knowing that, as it was with the blessed Job, his merits would be but increased by bodily affliction. Whilst he was thus detained some time in the same place by his infirmity, a fire broke out in a cottage neighbouring to that in which he was; and having burned down the other houses which were thatched with reed, fanned by the wind, was carried on to the dwelling in which he lay. The people all flocked to the prelate, entreating that they might lift him in their arms, and save him from the impending danger. But he rebuked them, and in the assurance of his faith, would not suffer himself to be removed. The whole multitude, in terror and despair, ran to oppose the conflagration; but, for the greater manifestation of the Divine power, whatsoever the crowd endeavoured to save, was destroyed; and what the sick and helpless man defended, the flame avoided and passed by, though the house that sheltered the holy man lay open to it, and while the fire raged on every side, the place in which he lay appeared untouched, amid the general conflagration. The multitude rejoiced at the miracle, and was gladly vanquished by the power of God. A great crowd of people watched day and night before the humble cottage; some to have their souls healed, and some their bodies. All that Christ wrought in the person of his servant, all the wonders the sick man performed cannot be told. Moreover, he would suffer no medicines to be applied to his infirmity; but one night he saw one clad in garments as white as snow, standing by him, who reaching out his hand, seemed to raise him up, and ordered him to stand firm upon his feet; from which time his pain ceased, and he was so perfectly restored, that when the day came, with good courage he set forth upon his journey.

Chap. XX.

How the same Bishops brought help from Heaven to the Britons in a battle, and then returned home. [430 a.d.]

In the meantime, the Saxons and Picts, with their united forces, made war upon the Britons, who in these straits were compelled to take up arms. In their terror thinking themselves unequal to their enemies, they implored the assistance of the holy bishops; who, hastening to them as they had promised, inspired so much confidence into these fearful people, that one would have thought they had been joined by a mighty army. Thus, by these apostolic leaders, Christ Himself commanded in their camp. The holy days of Lent were also at hand, and were rendered more sacred by the presence of the bishops, insomuch that the people being instructed by daily sermons, came together eagerly to receive the grace of baptism. For a great multitude of the army desired admission to the saving waters, and a wattled church was constructed for the Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord, and so fitted up for the army in the field as if it were in a city. Still wet with the baptismal water the troops set forth; the faith of the people was fired; and where arms had been deemed of no avail, they looked to the help of God. News reached the enemy of the manner and method of their purification, who, assured of success, as if they had to deal with an unarmed host, hastened forward with renewed eagerness. But their approach was made known by scouts. When, after the celebration of Easter, the greater part of the army, fresh from the font, began to take up arms and prepare for war, Germanus offered to be their leader. He picked out the most active, explored the country round about, and observed, in the way by which the enemy was expected, a valley encompassed by hills of moderate height. In that place he drew up his untried troops, himself acting as their general. And now a formidable host of foes drew near, visible, as they approached, to his men lying in ambush. Then, on a sudden, Germanus, bearing the standard, exhorted his men, and bade them all in a loud voice repeat his words. As the enemy advanced in all security, thinking to take them by surprise, the bishops three times cried, "Hallelujah." A universal shout of the same word followed, and the echoes from the surrounding hills gave back the cry on all sides, the enemy was panic-stricken, fearing, not only the neighbouring rocks, but even the very frame of heaven above them; and such was their terror, that their feet were not swift enough to save them. They fled in disorder, casting away their arms, and well satisfied if, even with unprotected bodies, they could escape the danger; many of them, flying headlong in their fear, were engulfed by the river which they had crossed. The Britons, without a blow, inactive spectators of the victory they had gained, beheld their vengeance complete. The scattered spoils were gathered up, and the devout soldiers rejoiced in the success which Heaven had granted them.

The prelates thus triumphed over the enemy without bloodshed, and gained a victory by faith, without the aid of human force. Thus, having settled the affairs of the island, and restored tranquillity by the defeat of the invisible foes, as well as of enemies in the flesh, they prepared to return home. Their own merits, and the intercession of the blessed martyr Alban, obtained for them a calm passage, and the happy vessel restored them in peace to the desires of their people.

Chap. XXI.

How, when the Pelagian heresy began to spring up afresh, Germanus, returning to Britain with Severus, first restored bodily strength to a lame youth, then spiritual health to the people of God, having condemned or converted the Heretics. [447 a.d.]

Not long after, news was brought from the same island, that certain persons were again attempting to teach and spread abroad the Pelagian heresy, and again the holy Germanus was entreated by all the priests, that he would defend the cause of God, which he had before maintained. He speedily complied with their request; and taking with him Severus, a man of singular sanctity, who was disciple to the blessed father, Lupus, bishop of Troyes, and at that time, having been ordained bishop of the Treveri, was preaching the Word of God to the tribes of Upper Germany, put to sea, and with favouring winds and calm waters sailed to Britain.

In the meantime, the evil spirits, speeding through the whole island, were constrained against their will to foretell that Germanus was coming, insomuch, that one Elafius, a chief of that region, without tidings from any visible messenger, hastened to meet the holy men, carrying with him his son, who in the very flower of his youth laboured under a grievous infirmity; for the sinews of the knee were wasted and shrunk, so that the withered limb was denied the power to walk. All the country followed this Elafius. The bishops arrived, and were met by the ignorant multitude, whom they blessed, and preached the Word of God to them. They found the people constant in the faith as they had left them; and learning that but few had gone astray, they sought out the authors of the evil and condemned them. Then suddenly Elafius cast himself at the feet of the bishops, presenting his son, whose distress was visible and needed no words to express it. All were grieved, but especially the bishops, who, filled with pity, invoked the mercy of God; and straightway the blessed Germanus, causing the youth to sit down, touched the bent and feeble knee and passed his healing hand over all the diseased part. At once health was restored by the power of his touch, the withered limb regained its vigour, the sinews resumed their task, and the youth was, in the presence of all the people, delivered whole to his father. The multitude was amazed at the miracle, and the Catholic faith was firmly established in the hearts of all; after which, they were, in a sermon, exhorted to amend their error. By the judgement of all, the exponents of the heresy, who had been banished from the island, were brought before the bishops, to be conveyed into the continent, that the country might be rid of them, and they corrected of their errors. So it came to pass that the faith in those parts continued long after pure and untainted. Thus when they had settled all things, the blessed prelates returned home as prosperously as they had come.

But Germanus, after this, went to Ravenna to intercede for the tranquillity of the Armoricans, where, after being very honourably received by Valentinian and his mother, Placidia, he departed hence to Christ; his body was conveyed to his own city with a splendid retinue, and mighty works attended his passage to the grave. Not long after, Valentinian was murdered by the followers of Aetius, the patrician, whom he had put to death, in the sixth year of the reign of Marcian, and with him ended the empire of the West.

Chap. XXII.

How the Britons, being for a time at rest from foreign invasions, wore themselves out by civil wars, and at the same time gave themselves up to more heinous crimes.

In the meantime, in Britain, there was some respite from foreign, but not from civil war. The cities destroyed by the enemy and abandoned remained in ruins; and the natives, who had escaped the enemy, now fought against each other. Nevertheless, the kings, priests, private men, and the nobility, still remembering the late calamities and slaughters, in some measure kept within bounds; but when these died, and another generation succeeded, which knew nothing of those times, and was only acquainted with the existing peaceable state of things, all the bonds of truth and justice were so entirely broken, that there was not only no trace of them remaining, but only very few persons seemed to retain any memory of them at all. To other crimes beyond description, which their own historian, Gildas, mournfully relates, they added this — that they never preached the faith to the Saxons, or English, who dwelt amongst them. Nevertheless, the goodness of God did not forsake his people, whom he foreknew, but sent to the aforesaid nation much more worthy heralds of the truth, to bring it to the faith.

Chap. XXIII.

How the holy Pope Gregory sent Augustine, with other monks, to preach to the English nation, and encouraged them by a letter of exhortation, not to desist from their labour. [596 a.d.]

In the year of our Lord 582, Maurice, the fifty-fourth from Augustus, ascended the throne, and reigned twenty-one years. In the tenth year of his reign, Gregory, a man eminent in learning and the conduct of affairs, was promoted to the Apostolic see of Rome, and presided over it thirteen years, six months and ten days. He, being moved by Divine inspiration, in the fourteenth year of the same emperor, and about the one hundred and fiftieth after the coming of the English into Britain, sent the servant of God, Augustine, and with him divers other monks, who feared the Lord, to preach the Word of God to the English nation. They having, in obedience to the pope's commands, undertaken that work, when they had gone but a little way on their journey, were seized with craven terror, and began to think of returning home, rather than proceed to a barbarous, fierce, and unbelieving nation, to whose very language they were strangers; and by common consent they decided that this was the safer course. At once Augustine, who had been appointed to be consecrated bishop, if they should be received by the English, was sent back, that he might, by humble entreaty, obtain of the blessed Gregory, that they should not be compelled to undertake so dangerous, toilsome, and uncertain a journey. The pope, in reply, sent them a letter of exhortation, persuading them to set forth to the work of the Divine Word, and rely on the help of God. The purport of which letter was as follows:

“Gregory, the servant of the servants of God, to the servants of our Lord. Forasmuch as it had been better not to begin a good work, than to think of desisting from one which has been begun, it behoves you, my beloved sons, to fulfil with all diligence the good work, which, by the help of the Lord, you have undertaken. Let not, therefore, the toil of the journey, nor the tongues of evil-speaking men, discourage you; but with all earnestness and zeal perform, by God's guidance, that which you have set about; being assured, that great labour is followed by the greater glory of an eternal reward. When Augustine, your Superior, returns, whom we also constitute your abbot, humbly obey him in all things; knowing, that whatsoever you shall do by his direction, will, in all respects, be profitable to your souls. Almighty God protect you with His grace, and grant that I may, in the heavenly country, see the fruits of your labour, inasmuch as, though I cannot labour with you, I shall partake in the joy of the reward, because I am willing to labour. God keep you in safety, my most beloved sons. Given the 23rd of July, in the fourteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the thirteenth year after the consulship of our lord aforesaid, and the fourteenth indiction.”

Chap. XXIV.

How he wrote to the bishop of Arles to entertain them. [596 a.d.]

The same venerable pope also sent at the same time a letter to Aetherius, archbishop of Arles, exhorting him to give favourable entertainment to Augustine on his way to Britain; which letter was in these words:

“To his most reverend and holy brother and fellow bishop Aetherius, Gregory, the servant of the servants of God. Although religious men stand in need of no recommendation with priests who have the charity which is pleasing to God; yet because an opportunity of writing has occurred, we have thought fit to send this letter to you, Brother, to inform you, that with the help of God we have directed thither, for the good of souls, the bearer of these presents, Augustine, the servant of God, of whose zeal we are assured, with other servants of God, whom it is requisite that your Holiness readily assist with priestly zeal, affording him all the comfort in your power. And to the end that you may be the more ready in your help, we have enjoined him to inform you particularly of the occasion of his coming; knowing, that when you are acquainted with it, you will, as the matter requires, for the sake of God, dutifully dispose yourself to give him comfort. We also in all things recommend to your charity, Candidus, the priest, our common son, whom we have transferred to the administration of a small patrimony in our Church. God keep you in safety, most reverend brother. Given the 23rd day of July, in the fourteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the thirteenth year after the consulship of our lord aforesaid, and the fourteenth indiction.”

Chap. XXV.

How Augustine, coming into Britain, first preached in the Isle of Thanet to the King of Kent, and having obtained licence from him, went into Kent, in order to preach therein. [597 a.d.]

Augustine, thus strengthened by the encouragement of the blessed Father Gregory, returned to the work of the Word of God, with the servants of Christ who were with him, and arrived in Britain. The powerful Ethelbert was at that time king of Kent; he had extended his dominions as far as the boundary formed by the great river Humber, by which the Southern Saxons are divided from the Northern. On the east of Kent is the large Isle of Thanet, containing, according to the English way of reckoning, 600 families, divided from the mainland by the river Wantsum, which is about three furlongs in breadth, and which can be crossed only in two places; for at both ends it runs into the sea. On this island landed the servant of the Lord, Augustine, and his companions, being, as is reported, nearly forty men. They had obtained, by order of the blessed Pope Gregory, interpreters of the nation of the Franks, and sending to Ethelbert, signified that they were come from Rome, and brought a joyful message, which most undoubtedly assured to those that hearkened to it everlasting joys in heaven, and a kingdom that would never end, with the living and true God. The king hearing this, gave orders that they should stay in the island where they had landed, and be furnished with necessaries, till he should consider what to do with them. For he had before heard of the Christian religion, having a Christian wife of the royal family of the Franks, called Bertha; whom he had received from her parents, upon condition that she should be permitted to preserve inviolate the rites of her religion with the Bishop Liudhard, who was sent with her to support her in the faith. Some days after, the king came into the island, and sitting in the open air, ordered Augustine and his companions to come and hold a conference with him. For he had taken precaution that they should not come to him in any house, lest, by so coming, according to an ancient superstition, if they practised any magical arts, they might impose upon him, and so get the better of him. But they came endued with Divine, not with magic power, bearing a silver cross for their banner, and the image of our Lord and Saviour painted on a board; and chanting litanies, they offered up their prayers to the Lord for the eternal salvation both of themselves and of those to whom and for whom they had come. When they had sat down, in obedience to the king's commands, and preached to him and his attendants there present the Word of life, the king answered thus: "Your words and promises are fair, but because they are new to us, and of uncertain import, I cannot consent to them so far as to forsake that which I have so long observed with the whole English nation. But because you are come from far as strangers into my kingdom, and, as I

conceive, are desirous to impart to us those things which you believe to be true, and most beneficial, we desire not to harm you, but will give you favourable entertainment, and take care to supply you with all things necessary to your sustenance; nor do we forbid you to preach and gain as many as you can to your religion.” Accordingly he gave them an abode in the city of Canterbury, which was the metropolis of all his dominions, and, as he had promised, besides supplying them with sustenance, did not refuse them liberty to preach. It is told that, as they drew near to the city, after their manner, with the holy cross, and the image of our sovereign Lord and King, Jesus Christ, they sang in concert this litany: “We beseech thee, O Lord, for Thy great mercy, that Thy wrath and anger be turned away from this city, and from Thy holy house, for we have sinned. Hallelujah.”

Chap. XXVI.

How St. Augustine in Kent followed the doctrine and manner of life of the primitive Church, and settled his episcopal see in the royal city. [597 a.d.]

As soon as they entered the dwelling-place assigned to them, they began to imitate the Apostolic manner of life in the primitive Church; applying themselves to constant prayer, watchings, and fastings; preaching the Word of life to as many as they could; despising all worldly things, as in nowise concerning them; receiving only their necessary food from those they taught; living themselves in all respects conformably to what they taught, and being always ready to suffer any adversity, and even to die for that truth which they preached. In brief, some believed and were baptized, admiring the simplicity of their blameless life, and the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine. There was on the east side of the city, a church dedicated of old to the honour of St. Martin, built whilst the Romans were still in the island, wherein the queen, who, as has been said before, was a Christian, was wont to pray. In this they also first began to come together, to chant the Psalms, to pray, to celebrate Mass, to preach, and to baptize, till when the king had been converted to the faith, they obtained greater liberty to preach everywhere and build or repair churches.

When he, among the rest, believed and was baptized, attracted by the pure life of these holy men and their gracious promises, the truth of which they established by many miracles, greater numbers began daily to flock together to hear the Word, and, forsaking their heathen rites, to have fellowship, through faith, in the unity of Christ's Holy Church. It is told that the king, while he rejoiced at their conversion and their faith, yet compelled none to embrace Christianity, but only showed more affection to the believers, as to his fellow citizens in the kingdom of Heaven. For he had learned from those who had instructed him and guided him to salvation, that the service of Christ ought to be voluntary, not by compulsion. Nor was it long before he gave his teachers a settled residence suited to their degree in his metropolis of Canterbury, with such possessions of divers sorts as were necessary for them.

Chap. XXVII.

How St. Augustine, being made a bishop, sent to acquaint Pope Gregory with what had been done in Britain, and asked and received replies, of which he stood in need. [597-601 a.d.]

In the meantime, Augustine, the man of God, went to Arles, and, according to the orders received from the holy Father Gregory, was ordained archbishop of the English nation, by Aetherius, archbishop of that city. Then returning into Britain, he sent Laurentius the priest and Peter the monk to Rome, to acquaint Pope Gregory, that the English nation had received the faith of Christ, and that he was himself made their bishop. At the same time, he desired his solution of some doubts which seemed urgent to him. He soon received fitting answers to his questions, which we have also thought meet to insert in this our history:

The First Question of the blessed Augustine, Bishop of the Church of Canterbury. — Concerning bishops, what should be their manner of conversation towards their clergy? or into how many portions the offerings of the faithful at the altar are to be divided? and how the bishop is to act in the Church?

Gregory, Pope of the City of Rome, answers. — Holy Scripture, in which we doubt not you are well versed, testifies to this, and in particular the Epistles of the Blessed Paul to Timothy, wherein he endeavours to show him what should be his manner of conversation in the house of God; but it is the custom of the Apostolic see to prescribe these rules to bishops when they are ordained: that all emoluments which accrue, are to be divided into four portions; — one for the bishop and his household, for hospitality and entertainment of guests; another for the clergy; a third for the poor; and the fourth for the repair of churches. But in that you, my brother, having been instructed in monastic rules, must not live apart from your clergy in the Church of the English, which has been lately, by the will of God, converted to the faith, you must establish the manner of conversation of our fathers in the primitive Church, among whom, none said that aught of the things which they possessed was his own, but they had all things common.

But if there are any clerks not received into holy orders, who cannot live continent, they are to take wives, and receive their stipends outside of the community; because we know that it is written concerning the same fathers of whom we have spoken that a distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. Care is also to be taken of their stipends, and provision to be made, and they are to be kept under ecclesiastical rule, that they may live orderly, and attend to singing of psalms, and, by the help of God, preserve their hearts and tongues and bodies from all that is unlawful. But as for those that live in common, there is no need to say anything of assigning portions, or

dispensing hospitality and showing mercy; inasmuch as all that they have over is to be spent in pious and religious works, according to the teaching of Him who is the Lord and Master of all, "Give alms of such things as ye have over, and behold all things are clean unto you."

Augustine's Second Question. — Whereas the faith is one and the same, are there different customs in different Churches? and is one custom of Masses observed in the holy Roman Church, and another in the Church of Gaul?

Pope Gregory answers. — You know, my brother, the custom of the Roman Church in which you remember that you were bred up. But my will is, that if you have found anything, either in the Roman, or the Gallican, or any other Church, which may be more acceptable to Almighty God, you should carefully make choice of the same, and sedulously teach the Church of the English, which as yet is new in the faith, whatsoever you can gather from the several Churches. For things are not to be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things. Choose, therefore, from every Church those things that are pious, religious, and right, and when you have, as it were, made them up into one bundle, let the minds of the English be accustomed thereto.

Augustine's Third Question. — I beseech you, what punishment must be inflicted on one who steals anything from a church?

Gregory answers. — You may judge, my brother, by the condition of the thief, in what manner he is to be corrected. For there are some, who, having substance, commit theft; and there are others, who transgress in this matter through want. Wherefore it is requisite, that some be punished with fines, others with stripes; some with more severity, and some more mildly. And when the severity is greater, it is to proceed from charity, not from anger; because this is done for the sake of him who is corrected, that he may not be delivered up to the fires of Hell. For it behoves us to maintain discipline among the faithful, as good parents do with their children according to the flesh, whom they punish with stripes for their faults, and yet they design to make those whom they chastise their heirs, and preserve their possessions for those whom they seem to visit in wrath. This charity is, therefore, to be kept in mind, and it dictates the measure of the punishment, so that the mind may do nothing beyond the rule prescribed by reason. You will add to this, how men are to restore those things which they have stolen from the church. But let not the Church take more than it has lost of its worldly possessions, or seek gain from vanities.

Augustine's Fourth Question. — Whether two full brothers may marry two sisters, who are of a family far removed from them?

Gregory answers. — Most assuredly this may lawfully be done; for nothing is found in Holy Writ on this matter that seems to contradict it.

Augustine's Fifth Question. — To what degree may the faithful marry with

their kindred? and is it lawful to marry a stepmother or a brother's wife?

Gregory answers. — A certain secular law in the Roman commonwealth allows, that the son and daughter of a brother and sister, or of two full brothers, or two sisters, may be joined in matrimony; but we have found, by experience, that the offspring of such wedlock cannot grow up; and the Divine law forbids a man to “uncover the nakedness of his kindred.” Hence of necessity it must be the third or fourth generation of the faithful, that can be lawfully joined in matrimony; for the second, which we have mentioned, must altogether abstain from one another. To marry with one's stepmother is a heinous crime, because it is written in the Law, “Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father:” now the son, indeed, cannot uncover his father's nakedness; but in regard that it is written, “They twain shall be one flesh,” he that presumes to uncover the nakedness of his stepmother, who was one flesh with his father, certainly uncovers the nakedness of his father. It is also prohibited to marry with a sister-in-law, because by the former union she is become the brother's flesh. For which thing also John the Baptist was beheaded, and obtained the crown of holy martyrdom. For, though he was not ordered to deny Christ, and it was not for confessing Christ that he was killed, yet inasmuch as the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, said, “I am the Truth,” because John was killed for the truth, he also shed his blood for Christ.

But forasmuch as there are many of the English, who, whilst they were still heathens, are said to have been joined in this unholy union, when they attain to the faith they are to be admonished to abstain, and be made to know that this is a grievous sin. Let them fear the dread judgement of God, lest, for the gratification of their carnal desires, they incur the torments of eternal punishment. Yet they are not on this account to be deprived of the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, lest they should seem to be punished for those things which they did through ignorance before they had received Baptism. For in these times the Holy Church chastises some things with zeal, and tolerates some in mercy, and is blind to some in her wisdom, and so, by forbearance and blindness often suppresses the evil that stands in her way. But all that come to the faith are to be admonished not to presume to do such things. And if any shall be guilty of them, they are to be excluded from the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ. For as the offence is, in some measure, to be tolerated in those who did it through ignorance, so it is to be rigorously punished in those who do not fear to sin knowingly.

Augustine's Sixth Question. — Whether a bishop may be consecrated without other bishops being present, if there be so great a distance between them, that they cannot easily come together?

Gregory answers. — In the Church of England, of which you are as yet the only bishop, you cannot otherwise ordain a bishop than in the absence of other bishops. For when do bishops come over from Gaul, that they may be present as witnesses to you in ordaining a bishop? But we would have you, my brother, to ordain bishops in such a manner, that the said bishops may not be

far asunder, to the end that there be no lack, but that at the ordination of a bishop other pastors also, whose presence is of great benefit, should easily come together. Thus, when, by the help of God, bishops shall have been ordained in places near to one another, no ordination of a bishop is to take place without assembling three or four bishops. For, even in spiritual affairs, we may take example by the temporal, that they may be wisely and discreetly conducted. For surely, when marriages are celebrated in the world, some married persons are assembled, that those who went before in the way of matrimony, may also partake in the joy of the new union. Why, then, at this spiritual ordinance, wherein, by means of the sacred ministry, man is joined to God, should not such persons be assembled, as may either rejoice in the advancement of the new bishop, or jointly pour forth their prayers to Almighty God for his preservation?

Augustine's Seventh Question. — How are we to deal with the bishops of Gaul and Britain?

Gregory answers. — We give you no authority over the bishops of Gaul, because the bishop of Arles received the pall in the old times of my predecessors, and we must by no means deprive him of the authority he has received. If it shall therefore happen, my brother, that you go over into the province of Gaul, you are to concert with the said bishop of Arles, how, if there be any faults among the bishops, they may be amended. And if he shall be lukewarm in keeping up discipline, he is to be fired by your zeal; to whom we have also written, that aided by the presence of your Holiness in Gaul, he should exert himself to the utmost, and put away from the behaviour of the bishops all that is opposed to the command of our Creator. But you shall not have power to go beyond your own authority and judge the bishops of Gaul, but by persuading, and winning them, and showing good works for them to imitate, you shall recall the perverted to the pursuit of holiness; for it is written in the Law, “When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest bruise the ears with thine hand and eat; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbours’ standing corn.” For thou mayest not apply the sickle of judgement in that harvest which thou seest to have been committed to another; but by the influence of good works thou shalt clear the Lord’s wheat of the chaff of its vices, and convert it by exhortation and persuasion in the body of the Church, as it were, by eating. But whatsoever is to be done by authority, must be transacted with the aforesaid bishop of Arles, lest that should be omitted, which the ancient institution of the fathers has appointed. But as for all the bishops of Britain, we commit them to your care, that the unlearned may be taught, the weak strengthened by persuasion, and the perverse corrected by authority.

Augustine's Eighth Question. — Whether a woman with child ought to be baptized? Or when she has brought forth, after what time she may come into the church? As also, after how many days the infant born may be baptized, lest he be prevented by death? Or how long after her husband may have carnal

knowledge of her? Or whether it is lawful for her to come into the church when she has her courses, or to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion? Or whether a man, under certain circumstances, may come into the church before he has washed with water? Or approach to receive the Mystery of the Holy Communion? All which things are requisite to be known by the ignorant nation of the English.

Gregory answers. — I do not doubt but that these questions have been put to you, my brother, and I think I have already answered you therein. But I believe you would wish the opinion which you yourself might give and hold to be confirmed by my reply also. Why should not a woman with child be baptized, since the fruitfulness of the flesh is no offence in the eyes of Almighty God? For when our first parents sinned in Paradise, they forfeited the immortality which they had received, by the just judgement of God. Because, therefore, Almighty God would not for their fault wholly destroy the human race, he both deprived man of immortality for his sin, and, at the same time, of his great goodness and loving-kindness, reserved to him the power of propagating his race after him. On what ground, then, can that which is preserved to human nature by the free gift of Almighty God, be excluded from the privilege of Holy Baptism? For it is very foolish to imagine that the gift can be opposed to grace in that Mystery in which all sin is blotted out. When a woman is delivered, after how many days she may come into the church, you have learnt from the teaching of the Old Testament, to wit, that she is to abstain for a male child thirty-three days, and sixty-six for a female. Now you must know that this is to be received in a mystery; for if she enters the church the very hour that she is delivered, to return thanks, she is not guilty of any sin; because the pleasure of the flesh is a fault, and not the pain; but the pleasure is in the copulation of the flesh, whereas there is pain in bringing forth the child. Wherefore it is said to the first mother of all, “In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children.” If, therefore, we forbid a woman that has brought forth, to enter the church, we make a crime of her very punishment. To baptize either a woman who has brought forth, if there be danger of death, even the very hour that she brings forth, or that which she has brought forth the very hour it is born, is in no way prohibited, because, as the grace of the Holy Mystery is to be with much discretion provided for those who are in full life and capable of understanding, so is it to be without any delay administered to the dying; lest, while a further time is sought to confer the Mystery of redemption, if a small delay intervene, the person that is to be redeemed be dead and gone.

Her husband is not to approach her, till the infant born be weaned. An evil custom is sprung up in the lives of married people, in that women disdain to suckle the children whom they bring forth, and give them to other women to suckle; which seems to have been invented on no other account but incontinency; because, as they will not be continent, they will not suckle the children whom they bear. Those women, therefore, who, from evil custom,

give their children to others to bring up, must not approach their husbands till the time of purification is past. For even when there has been no child-birth, women are forbidden to do so, whilst they have their courses, insomuch that the Law condemns to death any man that shall approach unto a woman during her uncleanness. Yet the woman, nevertheless, must not be forbidden to come into the church whilst she has her courses; because the superfluity of nature cannot be imputed to her as a crime; and it is not just that she should be refused admittance into the church, for that which she suffers against her will. For we know, that the woman who had the issue of blood, humbly approaching behind our Lord's back, touched the hem of his garment, and her infirmity immediately departed from her. If, therefore, she that had an issue of blood might commendably touch the garment of our Lord, why may not she, who has her courses, lawfully enter into the church of God? But you may say, Her infirmity compelled her, whereas these we speak of are bound by custom. Consider, then, most dear brother, that all we suffer in this mortal flesh, through the infirmity of our nature, is ordained by the just judgement of God after the fall; for to hunger, to thirst, to be hot, to be cold, to be weary, is from the infirmity of our nature; and what else is it to seek food against hunger, drink against thirst, air against heat, clothes against cold, rest against weariness, than to procure a remedy against distempers? Thus to a woman her courses are a distemper. If, therefore, it was a commendable boldness in her, who in her disease touched our Lord's garment, why may not that which is allowed to one infirm person, be granted to all women, who, through the fault of their nature, are rendered infirm?

She must not, therefore, be forbidden to receive the Mystery of the Holy Communion during those days. But if any one out of profound respect does not presume to do it, she is to be commended; yet if she receives it, she is not to be judged. For it is the part of noble minds in some manner to acknowledge their faults, even when there is no fault; because very often that is done without a fault, which, nevertheless, proceeded from a fault. Thus, when we are hungry, it is no sin to eat; yet our being hungry proceeds from the sin of the first man. The courses are no sin in women, because they happen naturally; yet, because our nature itself is so depraved, that it appears to be defiled even without the concurrence of the will, a defect arises from sin, and thereby human nature may itself know what it is become by judgement. And let man, who wilfully committed the offence, bear the guilt of that offence against his will. And, therefore, let women consider with themselves, and if they do not presume, during their courses, to approach the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord, they are to be commended for their praiseworthy consideration; but when they are carried away with love of the same Mystery to receive it according to the custom of the religious life, they are not to be restrained, as we said before. For as in the Old Testament the outward works are observed, so in the New Testament, that which is outwardly done, is not so diligently regarded as that which is inwardly thought, that the punishment

may be with discernment. For whereas the Law forbids the eating of many things as unclean, yet our Lord says in the Gospel, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man." And afterwards he added, expounding the same, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts." Where it is abundantly shown, that that is declared by Almighty God to be polluted in deed, which springs from the root of a polluted thought. Whence also Paul the Apostle says, "Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure." And presently, declaring the cause of that defilement, he adds, "For even their mind and conscience is defiled." If, therefore, meat is not unclean to him whose mind is not unclean, why shall that which a woman suffers according to nature, with a clean mind, be imputed to her as uncleanness?

A man who has approached his own wife is not to enter the church unless washed with water, nor is he to enter immediately although washed. The Law prescribed to the ancient people, that a man in such cases should be washed with water, and not enter into the church before the setting of the sun. Which, nevertheless, may be understood spiritually, because a man acts so when the mind is led by the imagination to unlawful concupiscence; for unless the fire of concupiscence be first driven from his mind, he is not to think himself worthy of the congregation of the brethren, while he sees himself burdened by the iniquity of a perverted will. For though divers nations have divers opinions concerning this affair, and seem to observe different rules, it was always the custom of the Romans, from ancient times, for such an one to seek to be cleansed by washing, and for some time reverently to forbear entering the church. Nor do we, in so saying, assign matrimony to be a fault; but forasmuch as lawful intercourse cannot be had without the pleasure of the flesh, it is proper to forbear entering the holy place, because the pleasure itself cannot be without a fault. For he was not born of adultery or fornication, but of lawful marriage, who said, "Behold I was conceived in iniquity, and in sin my mother brought me forth." For he who knew himself to have been conceived in iniquity, lamented that he was born from sin, because he bears the defect, as a tree bears in its bough the sap it drew from the root. In which words, however, he does not call the union of the married couple iniquity, but the will itself. For there are many things which are lawful and permitted, and yet we are somewhat defiled in doing them. As very often by being angry we correct faults, and at the same time disturb our own peace of mind; and though that which we do is right, yet it is not to be approved that our mind should be disturbed. For he who said, "My eye was disturbed with anger," had been angry at the vices of sinners. Now, seeing that only a calm mind can rest in the light of contemplation, he grieved that his eye was disturbed with anger; because, whilst he was correcting evil actions below, he was obliged to be confused and disturbed with regard to the contemplation of the highest things. Anger against vice is, therefore, commendable, and yet painful to a man, because he thinks that by his mind being agitated, he has incurred some guilt.

Lawful commerce, therefore, must be for the sake of children, not of pleasure; and must be to procure offspring, not to satisfy vices. But if any man is led not by the desire of pleasure, but only for the sake of getting children, such a man is certainly to be left to his own judgement, either as to entering the church, or as to receiving the Mystery of the Body and Blood of our Lord, which he, who being placed in the fire cannot burn, is not to be forbidden by us to receive. But when, not the love of getting children, but of pleasure prevails, the pair have cause to lament their deed. For this the holy preaching concedes to them, and yet fills the mind with dread of the very concession. For when Paul the Apostle said, "Let him that cannot contain have his own wife;" he presently took care to subjoin, "But this I say by way of permission, not of commandment." For that is not granted by way of permission which is lawful, because it is just; and, therefore, that which he said he permitted, he showed to be an offence.

It is seriously to be considered, that when God was about to speak to the people on Mount Sinai, He first commanded them to abstain from women. And if purity of body was there so carefully required, where God spoke to the people by the means of a creature as His representative, that those who were to hear the words of God should abstain; how much more ought women, who receive the Body of Almighty God, to preserve themselves in purity of flesh, lest they be burdened with the very greatness of that inestimable Mystery? For this reason also, it was said to David, concerning his men, by the priest, that if they were clean in this particular, they should receive the shewbread, which they would not have received at all, had not David first declared them to be clean. Then the man, who, afterwards, has been washed with water, is also capable of receiving the Mystery of the Holy Communion, when it is lawful for him, according to what has been before declared, to enter the church.

Augustine's Ninth Question. — Whether after an illusion, such as is wont to happen in a dream, any man may receive the Body of our Lord, or if he be a priest, celebrate the Divine Mysteries?

Gregory answers. — The Testament of the Old Law, as has been said already in the article above, calls such a man polluted, and allows him not to enter into the church till the evening, after being washed with water. Which, nevertheless, a spiritual people, taking in another sense, will understand in the same manner as above; because he is imposed upon as it were in a dream, who, being tempted with uncleanness, is defiled by real representations in thought, and he is to be washed with water, that he may cleanse away the sins of thought with tears; and unless the fire of temptation depart before, may know himself to be in a manner guilty until the evening. But a distinction is very necessary in that illusion, and one must carefully consider what causes it to arise in the mind of the person sleeping; for sometimes it proceeds from excess of eating or drinking; sometimes from the superfluity or infirmity of nature, and sometimes from the thoughts. And when it happens either through superfluity or infirmity of nature, such an illusion is not to be feared at all,

because it is to be lamented, that the mind of the person, who knew nothing of it, suffers the same, rather than that he occasioned it. But when the appetite of gluttony commits excess in food, and thereupon the receptacles of the humours are oppressed, the mind thence contracts some guilt; yet not so much as to hinder the receiving of the Holy Mystery, or celebrating Mass, when a holy day requires it, or necessity obliges the Mystery to be shown forth, because there is no other priest in the place; for if there be others who can perform the ministry, the illusion proceeding from over-eating ought not to exclude a man from receiving the sacred Mystery; but I am of opinion he ought humbly to abstain from offering the sacrifice of the Mystery, but not from receiving it, unless the mind of the person sleeping has been disturbed with some foul imagination. For there are some, who for the most part so suffer the illusion, that their mind, even during the sleep of the body, is not defiled with filthy thoughts. In which case, one thing is evident, that the mind is guilty, not being acquitted even in its own judgement; for though it does not remember to have seen anything whilst the body was sleeping, yet it calls to mind that, when the body was awake, it fell into gluttony. But if the illusion of the sleeper proceeds from evil thoughts when he was awake, then its guilt is manifest to the mind; for the man perceives from what root that defilement sprang, because what he had consciously thought of, that he afterwards unconsciously endured. But it is to be considered, whether that thought was no more than a suggestion, or proceeded to delight, or, what is worse, consented to sin. For all sin is committed in three ways, viz., by suggestion, by delight, and by consent. Suggestion comes from the Devil, delight from the flesh, and consent from the spirit. For the serpent suggested the first offence, and Eve, as flesh, took delight in it, but Adam, as the spirit, consented. And when the mind sits in judgement on itself, it must clearly distinguish between suggestion and delight, and between delight and consent. For when the evil spirit suggests a sin to the mind, if there ensue no delight in the sin, the sin is in no way committed; but when the flesh begins to take delight in it, then sin begins to arise. But if it deliberately consents, then the sin is known to be full-grown. The seed, therefore, of sin is in the suggestion, the nourishment of it in delight, its maturity in the consent. And it often happens that what the evil spirit sows in the thought, in that the flesh begins to find delight, and yet the soul does not consent to that delight. And whereas the flesh cannot be delighted without the mind, yet the mind struggling against the pleasures of the flesh, is after a manner unwillingly bound by the carnal delight, so that through reason it opposes it, and does not consent, yet being bound by delight, it grievously laments being so bound. Wherefore that great soldier of our Lord's host, groaned and said, "I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members." Now if he was a captive, he did not fight; but he did fight; wherefore he was a captive and at the same time therefore fought against the law of the mind, which the law that is in the members opposed; but

if he fought, he was no captive. Thus, then, man is, as I may say, a captive and yet free. Free on account of justice, which he loves, a captive by the delight which he unwillingly bears within him.

Chap. XXVIII.

How Pope Gregory wrote to the bishop of Arles to help Augustine in the work of God. [601 a.d.]

Thus far the answers of the holy Pope Gregory, to the questions of the most reverend prelate, Augustine. Now the letter, which he says he had written to the bishop of Arles, was directed to Vergilius, successor to Aetherius, and was in the following words:

“To his most reverend and holy brother and fellow bishop, Vergilius; Gregory, servant of the servants of God. With how much kindness brethren, coming of their own accord, are to be entertained, is shown by this, that they are for the most part invited for the sake of brotherly love. Therefore, if our common brother, Bishop Augustine, shall happen to come to you, let your love, as is becoming, receive him with so great kindness and affection, that it may refresh him by the benefit of its consolation and show to others how brotherly charity is to be cultivated. And, since it often happens that those who are at a distance first learn from others the things that need correction, if he bring before you, my brother, any sins of bishops or others, do you, in conjunction with him, carefully inquire into the same, and show yourself so strict and earnest with regard to those things which offend God and provoke His wrath, that for the amendment of others, the punishment may fall upon the guilty, and the innocent may not suffer under false report. God keep you in safety, most reverend brother. Given the 22nd day of June, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the eighteenth year after the consulship of our said lord, and the fourth indiction.”

Chap. XXIX.

How the same Pope sent to Augustine the Pall and a letter, along with several ministers of the Word. [601 a.d.]

Moreover, the same Pope Gregory, hearing from Bishop Augustine, that the harvest which he had was great and the labourers but few, sent to him, together with his aforesaid envoys, certain fellow labourers and ministers of the Word, of whom the chief and foremost were Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Rufinianus, and by them all things in general that were necessary for the worship and service of the Church, to wit, sacred vessels and altar-cloths, also church-furniture, and vestments for the bishops and clerks, as likewise relics of the holy Apostles and martyrs; besides many manuscripts. He also sent a letter, wherein he signified that he had despatched the pall to him, and at the same time directed how he should constitute bishops in Britain. The letter was in these words:

“To his most reverend and holy brother and fellow bishop, Augustine; Gregory, the servant of the servants of God. Though it be certain, that the unspeakable rewards of the eternal kingdom are reserved for those who labour for Almighty God, yet it is requisite that we bestow on them the benefit of honours, to the end that they may by this recompense be encouraged the more vigorously to apply themselves to the care of their spiritual work. And, seeing that the new Church of the English is, through the bounty of the Lord, and your labours, brought to the grace of God, we grant you the use of the pall in the same, only for the celebration of the solemn service of the Mass; that so you may ordain twelve bishops in different places, who shall be subject to your jurisdiction. But the bishop of London shall, for the future, be always consecrated by his own synod, and receive the pall, which is the token of his office, from this holy and Apostolic see, which I, by the grace of God, now serve. But we would have you send to the city of York such a bishop as you shall think fit to ordain; yet so, that if that city, with the places adjoining, shall receive the Word of God, that bishop shall also ordain twelve bishops, and enjoy the honour of a metropolitan; for we design, if we live, by the help of God, to bestow on him also the pall; and yet we would have him to be subject to your authority, my brother; but after your decease, he shall so preside over the bishops he shall have ordained, as to be in no way subject to the jurisdiction of the bishop of London. But for the future let there be this distinction as regards honour between the bishops of the cities of London and York, that he who has been first ordained have the precedence. But let them take counsel and act in concert and with one mind dispose whatsoever is to be done for zeal of Christ; let them judge rightly, and carry out their judgement without dissension.

“But to you, my brother, shall, by the authority of our God and Lord Jesus

Christ, be subject not only those bishops whom you shall ordain, and those that shall be ordained by the bishop of York, but also all the prelates in Britain; to the end that from the words and manner of life of your Holiness they may learn the rule of a right belief and a good life, and fulfilling their office in faith and righteousness, they may, when it shall please the Lord, attain to the kingdom of Heaven. God preserve you in safety, most reverend brother.

“Given the 22nd of June, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the eighteenth year after the consulship of our said lord, and the fourth indiction.”

Chap. XXX.

A copy of the letter which Pope Gregory sent to the Abbot Mellitus, then going into Britain. [601 a.d.]

The aforesaid envoys having departed, the blessed Father Gregory sent after them a letter worthy to be recorded, wherein he plainly shows how carefully he watched over the salvation of our country. The letter was as follows:

“To his most beloved son, the Abbot Mellitus; Gregory, the servant of the servants of God. We have been much concerned, since the departure of our people that are with you, because we have received no account of the success of your journey. Howbeit, when Almighty God has led you to the most reverend Bishop Augustine, our brother, tell him what I have long been considering in my own mind concerning the matter of the English people; to wit, that the temples of the idols in that nation ought not to be destroyed; but let the idols that are in them be destroyed; let water be consecrated and sprinkled in the said temples, let altars be erected, and relics placed there. For if those temples are well built, it is requisite that they be converted from the worship of devils to the service of the true God; that the nation, seeing that their temples are not destroyed, may remove error from their hearts, and knowing and adoring the true God, may the more freely resort to the places to which they have been accustomed. And because they are used to slaughter many oxen in sacrifice to devils, some solemnity must be given them in exchange for this, as that on the day of the dedication, or the nativities of the holy martyrs, whose relics are there deposited, they should build themselves huts of the boughs of trees about those churches which have been turned to that use from being temples, and celebrate the solemnity with religious feasting, and no more offer animals to the Devil, but kill cattle and glorify God in their feast, and return thanks to the Giver of all things for their abundance; to the end that, whilst some outward gratifications are retained, they may the more easily consent to the inward joys. For there is no doubt that it is impossible to cut off every thing at once from their rude natures; because he who endeavours to ascend to the highest place rises by degrees or steps, and not by leaps. Thus the Lord made Himself known to the people of Israel in Egypt; and yet He allowed them the use, in His own worship, of the sacrifices which they were wont to offer to the Devil, commanding them in His sacrifice to kill animals, to the end that, with changed hearts, they might lay aside one part of the sacrifice, whilst they retained another; and although the animals were the same as those which they were wont to offer, they should offer them to the true God, and not to idols; and thus they would no longer be the same sacrifices. This then, dearly beloved, it behoves you to communicate to our aforesaid brother, that he, being placed where he is at present, may consider how he is to order all things. God preserve you in safety, most

beloved son.

“Given the 17th of June, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the eighteenth year after the consulship of our said lord, and the fourth indiction.”

Chap. XXXI.

How Pope Gregory, by letter, exhorted Augustine not to glory in his miracles. [601 a.d.]

At which time he also sent Augustine a letter concerning the miracles that he had heard had been wrought by him; wherein he admonishes him not to incur the danger of being puffed up by the number of them. The letter was in these words:

“I know, dearly beloved brother, that Almighty God, by means of you, shows forth great miracles to the nation which it was His will to choose. Wherefore you must needs rejoice with fear, and fear with joy concerning that heavenly gift; for you will rejoice because the souls of the English are by outward miracles drawn to inward grace; but you will fear, lest, amidst the wonders that are wrought, the weak mind may be puffed up with self-esteem, and that whereby it is outwardly raised to honour cause it inwardly to fall through vain-glory. For we must call to mind, that when the disciples returned with joy from preaching, and said to their Heavenly Master, ‘Lord, even the devils are subject to us through Thy Name;’ forthwith they received the reply, ‘In this rejoice not; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.’ For their minds were set on private and temporal joys, when they rejoiced in miracles; but they are recalled from the private to the common joy, and from the temporal to the eternal, when it is said to them, ‘Rejoice in this, because your names are written in heaven.’ For all the elect do not work miracles, and yet the names of all are written in heaven. For those who are disciples of the truth ought not to rejoice, save for that good thing which all men enjoy as well as they, and in which their joy shall be without end.

“It remains, therefore, most dear brother, that amidst those outward actions, which you perform through the power of the Lord, you should always carefully judge yourself in your heart, and carefully understand both what you are yourself, and how much grace is bestowed upon that same nation, for the conversion of which you have received even the gift of working miracles. And if you remember that you have at any time sinned against our Creator, either by word or deed, always call it to mind, to the end that the remembrance of your guilt may crush the vanity which rises in your heart. And whatsoever gift of working miracles you either shall receive, or have received, consider the same, not as conferred on you, but on those for whose salvation it has been given you.”

Chap. XXXII.

How Pope Gregory sent letters and gifts to King Ethelbert. [601 a.d.]

The same blessed Pope Gregory, at the same time, sent a letter to King Ethelbert, with many gifts of divers sorts; being desirous to glorify the king with temporal honours, at the same time that he rejoiced that through his own labour and zeal he had attained to the knowledge of heavenly glory. The copy of the said letter is as follows:

“To the most glorious lord, and his most excellent son, Ethelbert, king of the English, Bishop Gregory. Almighty God advances good men to the government of nations, that He may by their means bestow the gifts of His loving-kindness on those over whom they are placed. This we know to have come to pass in the English nation, over whom your Highness was placed, to the end, that by means of the blessings which are granted to you, heavenly benefits might also be conferred on your subjects. Therefore, my illustrious son, do you carefully guard the grace which you have received from the Divine goodness, and be eager to spread the Christian faith among the people under your rule; in all uprightness increase your zeal for their conversion; suppress the worship of idols; overthrow the structures of the temples; establish the manners of your subjects by much cleanness of life, exhorting, terrifying, winning, correcting, and showing forth an example of good works, that you may obtain your reward in Heaven from Him, Whose Name and the knowledge of Whom you have spread abroad upon earth. For He, Whose honour you seek and maintain among the nations, will also render your Majesty’s name more glorious even to posterity.

“For even so the most pious emperor, Constantine, of old, recovering the Roman commonwealth from the false worship of idols, brought it with himself into subjection to Almighty God, our Lord Jesus Christ, and turned to Him with his whole mind, together with the nations under his rule. Whence it followed, that his praises transcended the fame of former princes; and he excelled his predecessors in renown as much as in good works. Now, therefore, let your Highness hasten to impart to the kings and peoples that are subject to you, the knowledge of one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that you may surpass the ancient kings of your nation in praise and merit, and while you cause the sins of others among your own subjects to be blotted out, become the more free from anxiety with regard to your own sins before the dread judgement of Almighty God.

“Willingly hear, devoutly perform, and studiously retain in your memory, whatsoever counsel shall be given you by our most reverend brother, Bishop Augustine, who is trained up in the monastic rule, full of the knowledge of Holy Scripture, and, by the help of God, endued with good works; for if you give ear to him when he speaks on behalf of Almighty God, the sooner will

Almighty God hear his prayers for you. But if (which God forbid!) you slight his words, how shall Almighty God hear him on your behalf, when you neglect to hear him on behalf of God? Unite yourself, therefore, to him with all your mind, in the fervour of faith, and further his endeavours, by that virtue which God has given you, that He may make you partaker of His kingdom, Whose faith you cause to be received and maintained in your own.

“Besides, we would have your Highness know that, as we find in Holy Scripture from the words of the Almighty Lord, the end of this present world, and the kingdom of the saints, which will never come to an end, is at hand. But as the end of the world draws near, many things are about to come upon us which were not before, to wit, changes in the air, and terrors from heaven, and tempests out of the order of the seasons, wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes in divers places; which things will not, nevertheless, all happen in our days, but will all follow after our days. If, therefore, you perceive that any of these things come to pass in your country, let not your mind be in any way disturbed; for these signs of the end of the world are sent before, for this reason, that we may take heed to our souls, and be watchful for the hour of death, and may be found prepared with good works to meet our Judge. Thus much, my illustrious son, I have said in few words, with intent that when the Christian faith is spread abroad in your kingdom, our discourse to you may also be more copious, and we may desire to say the more, as joy for the full conversion of your nation is increased in our mind.

“I have sent you some small gifts, which will not appear small to you, when received by you with the blessing of the blessed Apostle, Peter. May Almighty God, therefore, perfect in you His grace which He has begun, and prolong your life here through a course of many years, and in the fulness of time receive you into the congregation of the heavenly country. May the grace of God preserve you in safety, my most excellent lord and son.

“Given the 22nd day of June, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, in the eighteenth year after his consulship, and the fourth indiction.”

Chap. XXXIII.

How Augustine repaired the church of our Saviour, and built the monastery of the blessed Peter the Apostle; and concerning Peter the first abbot of the same.

Augustine having had his episcopal see granted him in the royal city, as has been said, recovered therein, with the support of the king, a church, which he was informed had been built of old by the faithful among the Romans, and consecrated it in the name of the Holy Saviour, our Divine Lord Jesus Christ, and there established a residence for himself and all his successors. He also built a monastery not far from the city to the eastward, in which, by his advice, Ethelbert erected from the foundation the church of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, and enriched it with divers gifts; wherein the bodies of the same Augustine, and of all the bishops of Canterbury, and of the kings of Kent, might be buried. Nevertheless, it was not Augustine himself who consecrated that church, but Laurentius, his successor.

The first abbot of that monastery was the priest Peter, who, being sent on a mission into Gaul, was drowned in a bay of the sea, which is called Amflea, and committed to a humble tomb by the inhabitants of the place; but since it was the will of Almighty God to reveal his merits, a light from Heaven was seen over his grave every night; till the neighbouring people who saw it, perceiving that he had been a holy man that was buried there, and inquiring who and whence he was, carried away the body, and interred it in the church, in the city of Boulogne, with the honour due to so great a person.

Chap. XXXIV.

How Ethelfrid, king of the Northumbrians, having vanquished the nations of the Scots, expelled them from the territories of the English. [603 a.d.]

At this time, the brave and ambitious king, Ethelfrid, governed the kingdom of the Northumbrians, and ravaged the Britons more than all the chiefs of the English, insomuch that he might be compared to Saul of old, king of the Israelites, save only in this, that he was ignorant of Divine religion. For he conquered more territories from the Britons than any other chieftain or king, either subduing the inhabitants and making them tributary, or driving them out and planting the English in their places. To him might justly be applied the saying of the patriarch blessing his son in the person of Saul, “Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.” Hereupon, Aedan, king of the Scots that dwell in Britain, being alarmed by his success, came against him with a great and mighty army, but was defeated and fled with a few followers; for almost all his army was cut to pieces at a famous place, called Degsastan, that is, Degsa Stone. In which battle also Theodbald, brother to Ethelfrid, was killed, with almost all the forces he commanded. This war Ethelfrid brought to an end in the year of our Lord 603, the eleventh of his own reign, which lasted twenty-four years, and the first year of the reign of Phocas, who then was at the head of the Roman empire. From that time, no king of the Scots durst come into Britain to make war on the English to this day.

Book II

Chap. I.

Of the death of the blessed Pope Gregory. [604 a.d.]

At this time, that is, in the year of our Lord 605, the blessed Pope Gregory, after having most gloriously governed the Roman Apostolic see thirteen years, six months, and ten days, died, and was translated to an eternal abode in the kingdom of Heaven. Of whom, seeing that by his zeal he converted our nation, the English, from the power of Satan to the faith of Christ, it behoves us to discourse more at large in our Ecclesiastical History, for we may rightly, nay, we must, call him our apostle; because, as soon as he began to wield the pontifical power over all the world, and was placed over the Churches long before converted to the true faith, he made our nation, till then enslaved to idols, the Church of Christ, so that concerning him we may use those words of the Apostle; “if he be not an apostle to others, yet doubtless he is to us; for the seal of his apostleship are we in the Lord.”

He was by nation a Roman, son of Gordianus, tracing his descent from ancestors that were not only noble, but religious. Moreover Felix, once bishop of the same Apostolic see, a man of great honour in Christ and in the Church, was his forefather. Nor did he show his nobility in religion by less strength of devotion than his parents and kindred. But that nobility of this world which was seen in him, by the help of the Divine Grace, he used only to gain the glory of eternal dignity; for soon quitting his secular habit, he entered a monastery, wherein he began to live with so much grace of perfection that (as he was wont afterwards with tears to testify) his mind was above all transitory things; that he rose superior to all that is subject to change; that he used to think of nothing but what was heavenly; that, whilst detained by the body, he broke through the bonds of the flesh by contemplation; and that he even loved death, which is a penalty to almost all men, as the entrance into life, and the reward of his labours. This he used to say of himself, not to boast of his progress in virtue, but rather to bewail the falling off which he imagined he had sustained through his pastoral charge. Indeed, once in a private conversation with his deacon, Peter, after having enumerated the former virtues of his soul, he added sorrowfully, “But now, on account of the pastoral charge, it is entangled with the affairs of laymen, and, after so fair an appearance of inward peace, is defiled with the dust of earthly action. And having wasted itself on outward things, by turning aside to the affairs of many men, even when it desires the inward things, it returns to them undoubtedly impaired. I therefore consider what I endure, I consider what I have lost, and when I behold what I have thrown away, that which I bear appears the more grievous.”

So spake the holy man constrained by his great humility. But it behoves us to believe that he lost nothing of his monastic perfection by reason of his

pastoral charge, but rather that he gained greater profit through the labour of converting many, than by the former calm of his private life, and chiefly because, whilst holding the pontifical office, he set about organizing his house like a monastery. And when first drawn from the monastery, ordained to the ministry of the altar, and sent to Constantinople as representative of the Apostolic see, though he now took part in the secular affairs of the palace, yet he did not abandon the fixed course of his heavenly life; for some of the brethren of his monastery, who had followed him to the royal city in their brotherly love, he employed for the better observance of monastic rule, to the end that at all times, by their example, as he writes himself, he might be held fast to the calm shore of prayer, as it were, with the cable of an anchor, whilst he should be tossed up and down by the ceaseless waves of worldly affairs; and daily in the intercourse of studious reading with them, strengthen his mind shaken with temporal concerns. By their company he was not only guarded against the assaults of the world, but more and more roused to the exercises of a heavenly life.

For they persuaded him to interpret by a mystical exposition the book of the blessed Job, which is involved in great obscurity; nor could he refuse to undertake that work, which brotherly affection imposed on him for the future benefit of many; but in a wonderful manner, in five and thirty books of exposition, he taught how that same book is to be understood literally; how to be referred to the mysteries of Christ and the Church; and in what sense it is to be adapted to every one of the faithful. This work he began as papal representative in the royal city, but finished it at Rome after being made pope. Whilst he was still in the royal city, by the help of the grace of Catholic truth, he crushed in its first rise a new heresy which sprang up there, concerning the state of our resurrection. For Eutychius, bishop of that city, taught, that our body, in the glory of resurrection, would be impalpable, and more subtile than wind and air. The blessed Gregory hearing this, proved by force of truth, and by the instance of the Resurrection of our Lord, that this doctrine was every way opposed to the orthodox faith. For the Catholic faith holds that our body, raised by the glory of immortality, is indeed rendered subtile by the effect of spiritual power, but is palpable by the reality of nature; according to the example of our Lord's Body, concerning which, when risen from the dead, He Himself says to His disciples, "Handle Me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have." In maintaining this faith, the venerable Father Gregory so earnestly strove against the rising heresy, and with the help of the most pious emperor, Tiberius Constantine, so fully suppressed it, that none has been since found to revive it.

He likewise composed another notable book, the "*Liber Pastoralis*," wherein he clearly showed what sort of persons ought to be preferred to rule the Church; how such rulers ought to live; with how much discrimination they ought to instruct the different classes of their hearers, and how seriously to reflect every day on their own frailty. He also wrote forty homilies on the

Gospel, which he divided equally into two volumes; and composed four books of Dialogues, in which, at the request of his deacon, Peter, he recounted the virtues of the more renowned saints of Italy, whom he had either known or heard of, as a pattern of life for posterity; to the end that, as he taught in his books of Expositions what virtues men ought to strive after, so by describing the miracles of saints, he might make known the glory of those virtues. Further, in twenty-two homilies, he showed how much light is latent in the first and last parts of the prophet Ezekiel, which seemed the most obscure. Besides which, he wrote the "Book of Answers," to the questions of the holy Augustine, the first bishop of the English nation, as we have shown above, inserting the same book entire in this history; and the useful little "Synodical Book," which he composed with the bishops of Italy on necessary matters of the Church; as well as private letters to certain persons. And it is the more wonderful that he could write so many lengthy works, seeing that almost all the time of his youth, to use his own words, he was frequently tormented with internal pain, constantly enfeebled by the weakness of his digestion, and oppressed by a low but persistent fever. But in all these troubles, forasmuch as he carefully reflected that, as the Scripture testifies, "He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth," the more severely he suffered under those present evils, the more he assured himself of his eternal hope.

Thus much may be said of his immortal genius, which could not be crushed by such severe bodily pains. Other popes applied themselves to building churches or adorning them with gold and silver, but Gregory was wholly intent upon gaining souls. Whatsoever money he had, he took care to distribute diligently and give to the poor, that his righteousness might endure for ever, and his horn be exalted with honour; so that the words of the blessed Job might be truly said of him, "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my judgement was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor; and the cause which I knew not, I searched out. And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth." And a little after: "If I have withheld," says he, "the poor from their desire; or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof: (for from my youth compassion grew up with me, and from my mother's womb it came forth with me.)"

To his works of piety and righteousness this also may be added, that he saved our nation, by the preachers he sent hither, from the teeth of the old enemy, and made it partaker of eternal liberty. Rejoicing in the faith and salvation of our race, and worthily commending it with praise, he says, in his exposition of the blessed Job, "Behold, the tongue of Britain, which only knew how to utter barbarous cries, has long since begun to raise the Hebrew

Hallelujah to the praise of God! Behold, the once swelling ocean now serves prostrate at the feet of the saints; and its wild upheavals, which earthly princes could not subdue with the sword, are now, through the fear of God, bound by the lips of priests with words alone; and the heathen that stood not in awe of troops of warriors, now believes and fears the tongues of the humble! For he has received a message from on high and mighty works are revealed; the strength of the knowledge of God is given him, and restrained by the fear of the Lord, he dreads to do evil, and with all his heart desires to attain to everlasting grace." In which words the blessed Gregory shows us this also, that St. Augustine and his companions brought the English to receive the truth, not only by the preaching of words, but also by showing forth heavenly signs.

The blessed Pope Gregory, among other things, caused Masses to be celebrated in the churches of the holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, over their bodies. And in the celebration of Masses, he added three petitions of the utmost perfection: "And dispose our days in thy peace, and bid us to be preserved from eternal damnation, and to be numbered in the flock of thine elect."

He governed the Church in the days of the Emperors Mauritius and Phocas, and passing out of this life in the second year of the same Phocas, he departed to the true life which is in Heaven. His body was buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter before the sacristy, on the 12th day of March, to rise one day in the same body in glory with the rest of the holy pastors of the Church. On his tomb was written this epitaph:

Receive, O Earth, his body taken from thine own; thou canst restore it, when God calls to life. His spirit rises to the stars; the claims of death shall not avail against him, for death itself is but the way to new life. In this tomb are laid the limbs of a great pontiff, who yet lives for ever in all places in countless deeds of mercy. Hunger and cold he overcame with food and raiment, and shielded souls from the enemy by his holy teaching. And whatsoever he taught in word, that he fulfilled in deed, that he might be a pattern, even as he spake words of mystic meaning. By his guiding love he brought the Angles to Christ, gaining armies for the Faith from a new people. This was thy toil, thy task, thy care, thy aim as shepherd, to offer to thy Lord abundant increase of the flock. So, Consul of God, rejoice in this thy triumph, for now thou hast the reward of thy works for evermore.

Nor must we pass by in silence the story of the blessed Gregory, handed down to us by the tradition of our ancestors, which explains his earnest care for the salvation of our nation. It is said that one day, when some merchants had lately arrived at Rome, many things were exposed for sale in the market place, and much people resorted thither to buy: Gregory himself went with the rest, and saw among other wares some boys put up for sale, of fair complexion, with pleasing countenances, and very beautiful hair. When he beheld them, he asked, it is said, from what region or country they were

brought? and was told, from the island of Britain, and that the inhabitants were like that in appearance. He again inquired whether those islanders were Christians, or still involved in the errors of paganism, and was informed that they were pagans. Then fetching a deep sigh from the bottom of his heart, "Alas! what pity," said he, "that the author of darkness should own men of such fair countenances; and that with such grace of outward form, their minds should be void of inward grace." He therefore again asked, what was the name of that nation? and was answered, that they were called Angles. "Right," said he, "for they have an angelic face, and it is meet that such should be co-heirs with the Angels in heaven. What is the name of the province from which they are brought?" It was replied, that the natives of that province were called Deiri. "Truly are they *De ira*," said he, "saved from wrath, and called to the mercy of Christ. How is the king of that province called?" They told him his name was Aelli; and he, playing upon the name, said, "Allelujah, the praise of God the Creator must be sung in those parts."

Then he went to the bishop of the Roman Apostolic see (for he was not himself then made pope), and entreated him to send some ministers of the Word into Britain to the nation of the English, that it might be converted to Christ by them; declaring himself ready to carry out that work with the help of God, if the Apostolic Pope should think fit to have it done. But not being then able to perform this task, because, though the Pope was willing to grant his request, yet the citizens of Rome could not be brought to consent that he should depart so far from the city, as soon as he was himself made Pope, he carried out the long-desired work, sending, indeed, other preachers, but himself by his exhortations and prayers helping the preaching to bear fruit. This account, which we have received from a past generation, we have thought fit to insert in our Ecclesiastical History.

Chap. II.

How Augustine admonished the bishops of the Britons on behalf of Catholic peace, and to that end wrought a heavenly miracle in their presence; and of the vengeance that pursued them for their contempt.
[*Circ. 603 a.d.*]

In the meantime, Augustine, with the help of King Ethelbert, drew together to a conference the bishops and doctors of the nearest province of the Britons, at a place which is to this day called, in the English language, Augustine's Ác, that is, Augustine's Oak, on the borders of the Hwiccas and West Saxons; and began by brotherly admonitions to persuade them to preserve Catholic peace with him, and undertake the common labour of preaching the Gospel to the heathen for the Lord's sake. For they did not keep Easter Sunday at the proper time, but from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon; which computation is contained in a cycle of eighty-four years. Besides, they did many other things which were opposed to the unity of the church. When, after a long disputation, they did not comply with the entreaties, exhortations, or rebukes of Augustine and his companions, but preferred their own traditions before all the Churches which are united in Christ throughout the world, the holy father, Augustine, put an end to this troublesome and tedious contention, saying, "Let us entreat God, who maketh men to be of one mind in His Father's house, to vouchsafe, by signs from Heaven, to declare to us which tradition is to be followed; and by what path we are to strive to enter His kingdom. Let some sick man be brought, and let the faith and practice of him, by whose prayers he shall be healed, be looked upon as hallowed in God's sight and such as should be adopted by all." His adversaries unwillingly consenting, a blind man of the English race was brought, who having been presented to the British bishops, found no benefit or healing from their ministry; at length, Augustine, compelled by strict necessity, bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying that He would restore his lost sight to the blind man, and by the bodily enlightenment of one kindle the grace of spiritual light in the hearts of many of the faithful. Immediately the blind man received sight, and Augustine was proclaimed by all to be a true herald of the light from Heaven. The Britons then confessed that they perceived that it was the true way of righteousness which Augustine taught; but that they could not depart from their ancient customs without the consent and sanction of their people. They therefore desired that a second time a synod might be appointed, at which more of their number should be present.

This being decreed, there came, it is said, seven bishops of the Britons, and many men of great learning, particularly from their most celebrated monastery, which is called, in the English tongue, Bancornaburg, and over which the Abbot Dinoot is said to have presided at that time. They that were

to go to the aforesaid council, betook themselves first to a certain holy and discreet man, who was wont to lead the life of a hermit among them, to consult with him, whether they ought, at the preaching of Augustine, to forsake their traditions. He answered, "If he is a man of God, follow him."—"How shall we know that?" said they. He replied, "Our Lord saith, Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; if therefore, Augustine is meek and lowly of heart, it is to be believed that he bears the yoke of Christ himself, and offers it to you to bear. But, if he is harsh and proud, it is plain that he is not of God, nor are we to regard his words." They said again, "And how shall we discern even this?"—"Do you contrive," said the anchorite, "that he first arrive with his company at the place where the synod is to be held; and if at your approach he rises up to you, hear him submissively, being assured that he is the servant of Christ; but if he despises you, and does not rise up to you, whereas you are more in number, let him also be despised by you."

They did as he directed; and it happened, that as they approached, Augustine was sitting on a chair. When they perceived it, they were angry, and charging him with pride, set themselves to contradict all he said. He said to them, "Many things ye do which are contrary to our custom, or rather the custom of the universal Church, and yet, if you will comply with me in these three matters, to wit, to keep Easter at the due time; to fulfil the ministry of Baptism, by which we are born again to God, according to the custom of the holy Roman Apostolic Church; and to join with us in preaching the Word of God to the English nation, we will gladly suffer all the other things you do, though contrary to our customs." They answered that they would do none of those things, nor receive him as their archbishop; for they said among themselves, "if he would not rise up to us now, how much more will he despise us, as of no account, if we begin to be under his subjection?" Then the man of God, Augustine, is said to have threatened them, that if they would not accept peace with their brethren, they should have war from their enemies; and, if they would not preach the way of life to the English nation, they should suffer at their hands the vengeance of death. All which, through the dispensation of the Divine judgement, fell out exactly as he had predicted.

For afterwards the warlike king of the English, Ethelfrid, of whom we have spoken, having raised a mighty army, made a very great slaughter of that heretical nation, at the city of Legions, which by the English is called Legacaestir, but by the Britons more rightly Carlegion. Being about to give battle, he observed their priests, who were come together to offer up their prayers to God for the combatants, standing apart in a place of greater safety; he inquired who they were, and what they came together to do in that place. Most of them were of the monastery of Bangor, in which, it is said, there was so great a number of monks, that the monastery being divided into seven parts, with a superior set over each, none of those parts contained less than

three hundred men, who all lived by the labour of their hands. Many of these, having observed a fast of three days, had come together along with others to pray at the aforesaid battle, having one Brocmail for their protector, to defend them, whilst they were intent upon their prayers, against the swords of the barbarians. King Ethelfrid being informed of the occasion of their coming, said, "If then they cry to their God against us, in truth, though they do not bear arms, yet they fight against us, because they assail us with their curses." He, therefore, commanded them to be attacked first, and then destroyed the rest of the impious army, not without great loss of his own forces. About twelve hundred of those that came to pray are said to have been killed, and only fifty to have escaped by flight. Brocmail, turning his back with his men, at the first approach of the enemy, left those whom he ought to have defended unarmed and exposed to the swords of the assailants. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy of the holy Bishop Augustine, though he himself had been long before taken up into the heavenly kingdom, that the heretics should feel the vengeance of temporal death also, because they had despised the offer of eternal salvation.

Chap. III.

How St. Augustine made Mellitus and Justus bishops; and of his death.

[604 a.d.]

In the year of our Lord 604, Augustine, Archbishop of Britain, ordained two bishops, to wit, Mellitus and Justus; Mellitus to preach to the province of the East-Saxons, who are divided from Kent by the river Thames, and border on the Eastern sea. Their metropolis is the city of London, which is situated on the bank of the aforesaid river, and is the mart of many nations resorting to it by sea and land. At that time, Sabert, nephew to Ethelbert through his sister Ricula, reigned over the nation, though he was under subjection to Ethelbert, who, as has been said above, had command over all the nations of the English as far as the river Humber. But when this province also received the word of truth, by the preaching of Mellitus, King Ethelbert built the church of St. Paul the Apostle, in the city of London, where he and his successors should have their episcopal see. As for Justus, Augustine ordained him bishop in Kent, at the city of Dorubrevi, which the English call Hrofaescaestrae, from one that was formerly the chief man of it, called Hrof. It is about twenty-four miles distant from the city of Canterbury to the westward, and in it King Ethelbert dedicated a church to the blessed Apostle Andrew, and bestowed many gifts on the bishops of both those churches, as well as on the Bishop of Canterbury, adding lands and possessions for the use of those who were associated with the bishops.

After this, the beloved of God, our father Augustine, died, and his body was laid outside, close by the church of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, above spoken of, because it was not yet finished, nor consecrated, but as soon as it was consecrated, the body was brought in, and fittingly buried in the north chapel thereof; wherein also were interred the bodies of all the succeeding archbishops, except two only, Theodore and Bertwald, whose bodies are in the church itself, because the aforesaid chapel could contain no more. Almost in the midst of this chapel is an altar dedicated in honour of the blessed Pope Gregory, at which every Saturday memorial Masses are celebrated for the archbishops by a priest of that place. On the tomb of Augustine is inscribed this epitaph:

“Here rests the Lord Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, who, being of old sent hither by the blessed Gregory, Bishop of the city of Rome, and supported by God in the working of miracles, led King Ethelbert and his nation from the worship of idols to the faith of Christ, and having ended the days of his office in peace, died the 26th day of May, in the reign of the same king.”

Chap. IV.

How Laurentius and his bishops admonished the Scots to observe the unity of the Holy Church, particularly in keeping of Easter; and how Mellitus went to Rome.

Laurentius succeeded Augustine in the bishopric, having been ordained thereto by the latter, in his lifetime, lest, upon his death, the Church, as yet in so unsettled a state, might begin to falter, if it should be destitute of a pastor, though but for one hour. Wherein he also followed the example of the first pastor of the Church, that is, of the most blessed Peter, chief of the Apostles, who, having founded the Church of Christ at Rome, is said to have consecrated Clement to help him in preaching the Gospel, and at the same time to be his successor. Laurentius, being advanced to the rank of archbishop, laboured indefatigably, both by frequent words of holy exhortation and constant example of good works to strengthen the foundations of the Church, which had been so nobly laid, and to carry it on to the fitting height of perfection. In short, he not only took charge of the new Church formed among the English, but endeavoured also to bestow his pastoral care upon the tribes of the ancient inhabitants of Britain, as also of the Scots, who inhabit the island of Ireland, which is next to Britain. For when he understood that the life and profession of the Scots in their aforesaid country, as well as of the Britons in Britain, was not truly in accordance with the practice of the Church in many matters, especially that they did not celebrate the festival of Easter at the due time, but thought that the day of the Resurrection of our Lord ought, as has been said above, to be observed between the 14th and 20th of the moon; he wrote, jointly with his fellow bishops, a hortatory epistle, entreating and conjuring them to keep the unity of peace and Catholic observance with the Church of Christ spread throughout the world. The beginning of which epistle is as follows:

“To our most dear brethren, the Lords Bishops and Abbots throughout all the country of the Scots, Laurentius, Mellitus, and Justus, Bishops, servants of the servants of God. When the Apostolic see, according to the universal custom which it has followed elsewhere, sent us to these western parts to preach to pagan nations, and it was our lot to come into this island, which is called Britain, before we knew them, we held both the Britons and Scots in great esteem for sanctity, believing that they walked according to the custom of the universal Church; but becoming acquainted with the Britons, we thought that the Scots had been better. Now we have learnt from Bishop Dagan, who came into this aforesaid island, and the Abbot Columban, in Gaul, that the Scots in no way differ from the Britons in their walk; for when Bishop Dagan came to us, not only did he refuse to eat at the same table, but even to eat in the same house where we were entertained.”

Also Laurentius with his fellow bishops wrote a letter to the bishops of the Britons, suitable to his degree, by which he endeavoured to confirm them in Catholic unity; but what he gained by so doing the present times still show.

About this time, Mellitus, bishop of London, went to Rome, to confer with the Apostolic Pope Boniface about the necessary affairs of the English Church. And the same most reverend pope, assembling a synod of the bishops of Italy, to prescribe rules for the life and peace of the monks, Mellitus also sat among them, in the eighth year of the reign of the Emperor Phocas, the thirteenth indiction, on the 27th of February, to the end that he also might sign and confirm by his authority whatsoever should be regularly decreed, and on his return into Britain might carry the decrees to the Churches of the English, to be committed to them and observed; together with letters which the same pope sent to the beloved of God, Archbishop Laurentius, and to all the clergy; as likewise to King Ethelbert and the English nation. This pope was Boniface, the fourth after the blessed Gregory, bishop of the city of Rome. He obtained for the Church of Christ from the Emperor Phocas the gift of the temple at Rome called by the ancients Pantheon, as representing all the gods; wherein he, having purified it from all defilement, dedicated a church to the holy Mother of God, and to all Christ's martyrs, to the end that, the company of devils being expelled, the blessed company of the saints might have therein a perpetual memorial.

Chap. V.

How, after the death of the kings Ethelbert and Sabert, their successors restored idolatry; for which reason, both Mellitus and Justus departed out of Britain. [616 a.d.]

In the year of our Lord 616, which is the twenty-first year after Augustine and his company were sent to preach to the English nation, Ethelbert, king of Kent, having most gloriously governed his temporal kingdom fifty-six years, entered into the eternal joys of the kingdom of Heaven. He was the third of the English kings who ruled over all the southern provinces that are divided from the northern by the river Humber and the borders contiguous to it; but the first of all that ascended to the heavenly kingdom. The first who had the like sovereignty was Aelli, king of the South-Saxons; the second, Caelin, king of the West-Saxons, who, in their own language, is called Ceaulin; the third, as has been said, was Ethelbert, king of Kent; the fourth was Redwald, king of the East-Angles, who, even in the life-time of Ethelbert, had been acquiring the leadership for his own race. The fifth was Edwin, king of the Northumbrian nation, that is, of those who live in the district to the north of the river Humber; his power was greater; he had the overlordship over all the nations who inhabit Britain, both English and British, except only the people of Kent; and he reduced also under the dominion of the English, the Mevanian Islands of the Britons, lying between Ireland and Britain; the sixth was Oswald, the most Christian king of the Northumbrians, whose kingdom was within the same bounds; the seventh, his brother Oswy, ruled over a kingdom of like extent for a time, and for the most part subdued and made tributary the nations of the Picts and Scots, who occupy the northern parts of Britain: but of that hereafter.

King Ethelbert died on the 24th day of the month of February, twenty-one years after he had received the faith, and was buried in St. Martin's chapel within the church of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, where also lies his queen, Bertha. Among other benefits which he conferred upon his nation in his care for them, he established, with the help of his council of wise men, judicial decisions, after the Roman model; which are written in the language of the English, and are still kept and observed by them. Among which, he set down first what satisfaction should be given by any one who should steal anything belonging to the Church, the bishop, or the other clergy, for he was resolved to give protection to those whom he had received along with their doctrine.

This Ethelbert was the son of Irminric, whose father was Octa, whose father was Oeric, surnamed Oisc, from whom the kings of Kent are wont to be called Oiscings. His father was Hengist, who, being invited by Vortigern, first came into Britain, with his son Oisc, as has been said above.

But after the death of Ethelbert, the accession of his son Eadbald proved very harmful to the still tender growth of the new Church; for he not only refused to accept the faith of Christ, but was also defiled with such fornication, as the Apostle testifies, as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. By both which crimes he gave occasion to those to return to their former uncleanness, who, under his father, had, either for favour or fear of the king, submitted to the laws of the faith and of a pure life. Nor did the unbelieving king escape without the scourge of Divine severity in chastisement and correction; for he was troubled with frequent fits of madness, and possessed by an unclean spirit. The storm of this disturbance was increased by the death of Sabert, king of the East Saxons, who departing to the heavenly kingdom, left three sons, still pagans, to inherit his temporal crown. They immediately began openly to give themselves up to idolatry, which, during their father's lifetime, they had seemed somewhat to abandon, and they granted free licence to their subjects to serve idols. And when they saw the bishop, whilst celebrating Mass in the church, give the Eucharist to the people, filled, as they were, with folly and ignorance, they said to him, as is commonly reported, "Why do you not give us also that white bread, which you used to give to our father Saba (for so they were wont to call him), and which you still continue to give to the people in the church?" To whom he answered, "If you will be washed in that font of salvation, in which your father was washed, you may also partake of the holy Bread of which he partook; but if you despise the laver of life, you can in no wise receive the Bread of life." They replied, "We will not enter into that font, because we know that we do not stand in need of it, and yet we will be refreshed by that bread." And being often earnestly admonished by him, that this could by no means be done, nor would any one be admitted to partake of the sacred Oblation without the holy cleansing, at last, they said, filled with rage, "If you will not comply with us in so small a matter as that which we require, you shall not stay in our province." And they drove him out and bade him and his company depart from their kingdom. Being driven thence, he came into Kent, to take counsel with his fellow bishops, Laurentius and Justus, and learn what was to be done in that case; and with one consent they determined that it was better for them all to return to their own country, where they might serve God in freedom of mind, than to continue to no purpose among barbarians, who had revolted from the faith. Mellitus and Justus accordingly went away first, and withdrew into the parts of Gaul, intending there to await the event. But the kings, who had driven from them the herald of the truth, did not continue long unpunished in their worship of devils. For marching out to battle against the nation of the Gewissi, they were all slain with their army. Nevertheless, the people, having been once turned to wickedness, though the authors of it were destroyed, would not be corrected, nor return to the unity of faith and charity which is in Christ.

Chap. VI.

How Laurentius, being reprov'd by the Apostle Peter, converted King Eadbald to Christ; and how the king soon recalled Mellitus and Justus to preach the Word. [617-618 a.d.]

Laurentius, being about to follow Mellitus and Justus, and to quit Britain, ordered his bed to be laid that night in the church of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, which has been often mentioned before; wherein having laid himself to rest, after he had with tears poured forth many prayers to God for the state of the Church, he fell asleep; in the dead of night, the blessed chief of the Apostles appeared to him, and scourging him grievously a long time, asked of him with apostolic severity, why he was forsaking the flock which he had committed to him? or to what shepherd he was leaving, by his flight, Christ's sheep that were in the midst of wolves? "Hast thou," he said, "forgotten my example, who, for the sake of those little ones, whom Christ commended to me in token of His affection, underwent at the hands of infidels and enemies of Christ, bonds, stripes, imprisonment, afflictions, and lastly, death itself, even the death of the cross, that I might at last be crowned with Him?" Laurentius, the servant of Christ, roused by the scourging of the blessed Peter and his words of exhortation, went to the king as soon as morning broke, and laying aside his garment, showed the scars of the stripes which he had received. The king, astonished, asked who had presumed to inflict such stripes on so great a man. And when he heard that for the sake of his salvation the bishop had suffered these cruel blows at the hands of the Apostle of Christ, he was greatly afraid; and abjuring the worship of idols, and renouncing his unlawful marriage, he received the faith of Christ, and being baptized, promoted and supported the interests of the Church to the utmost of his power.

He also sent over into Gaul, and recalled Mellitus and Justus, and bade them return to govern their churches in freedom. They came back one year after their departure, and Justus returned to the city of Rochester, where he had before presided; but the people of London would not receive Bishop Mellitus, choosing rather to be under their idolatrous high priests; for King Eadbald had not so much authority in the kingdom as his father, and was not able to restore the bishop to his church against the will and consent of the pagans. But he and his nation, after his conversion to the Lord, sought to obey the commandments of God. Lastly, he built the church of the holy Mother of God, in the monastery of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, which was afterwards consecrated by Archbishop Mellitus.

Chap. VII.

How Bishop Mellitus by prayer quenched a fire in his city. [619 a.d.]

In this king's reign, the blessed Archbishop Laurentius was taken up to the heavenly kingdom: he was buried in the church and monastery of the holy Apostle Peter, close by his predecessor Augustine, on the 2nd day of the month of February. Mellitus, who was bishop of London, succeeded to the see of Canterbury, being the third archbishop from Augustine; Justus, who was still living, governed the church of Rochester. These ruled the Church of the English with much care and industry, and received letters of exhortation from Boniface, bishop of the Roman Apostolic see, who presided over the Church after Deusededit, in the year of our Lord 619. Mellitus laboured under the bodily infirmity of gout, but his mind was sound and active, cheerfully passing over all earthly things, and always aspiring to love, seek, and attain to those which are celestial. He was noble by birth, but still nobler by the elevation of his mind.

In short, that I may give one instance of his power, from which the rest may be inferred, it happened once that the city of Canterbury, being set on fire through carelessness, was in danger of being consumed by the spreading conflagration; water was thrown on the fire in vain; a considerable part of the city was already destroyed, and the fierce flames were advancing towards the bishop's abode, when he, trusting in God, where human help failed, ordered himself to be carried towards the raging masses of fire which were spreading on every side. The church of the four crowned Martyrs was in the place where the fire raged most fiercely. The bishop, being carried thither by his servants, weak as he was, set about averting by prayer the danger which the strong hands of active men had not been able to overcome with all their exertions. Immediately the wind, which blowing from the south had spread the conflagration throughout the city, veered to the north, and thus prevented the destruction of those places that had been exposed to its full violence, then it ceased entirely and there was a calm, while the flames likewise sank and were extinguished. And because the man of God burned with the fire of divine love, and was wont to drive away the storms of the powers of the air, by his frequent prayers and at his bidding, from doing harm to himself, or his people, it was meet that he should be allowed to prevail over the winds and flames of this world, and to obtain that they should not injure him or his.

This archbishop also, having ruled the church five years, departed to heaven in the reign of King Eadbald, and was buried with his fathers in the monastery and church, which we have so often mentioned, of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, in the year of our Lord 624, on the 24th day of April.

Chap. VIII.

How Pope Boniface sent the Pall and a letter to Justus, successor to Mellitus. [624 a.d.]

Justus, bishop of the church of Rochester, immediately succeeded Mellitus in the archbishopric. He consecrated Romanus bishop of that see in his own stead, having obtained authority to ordain bishops from Pope Boniface, whom we mentioned above as successor to Deusdedit: of which licence this is the form:

“Boniface, to his most beloved brother Justus. We have learnt not only from the contents of your letter addressed to us, but from the fulfilment granted to your work, how faithfully and vigilantly you have laboured, my brother, for the Gospel of Christ; for Almighty God has not forsaken either the mystery of His Name, or the fruit of your labours, having Himself faithfully promised to the preachers of the Gospel, ‘Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world’; which promise His mercy has particularly manifested in this ministry imposed upon you, opening the hearts of the nations to receive the wondrous mystery of your preaching. For He has blessed with a rich reward your Eminence’s acceptable course, by the support of His loving kindness; granting a plentiful increase to your labours in the faithful management of the talents committed to you, and bestowing it on that which you might confirm to many generations. This is conferred on you by that recompense whereby, constantly persevering in the ministry imposed upon you, you have awaited with praiseworthy patience the redemption of that nation, and that they might profit by your merits, salvation has been bestowed on them. For our Lord Himself says, ‘He that endureth to the end shall be saved.’ You are, therefore, saved by the hope of patience, and the virtue of endurance, to the end that the hearts of unbelievers, being cleansed from their natural disease of superstition, might obtain the mercy of their Saviour: for having received letters from our son Adulwald, we perceive with how much knowledge of the Sacred Word you, my brother, have brought his mind to the belief in true conversion and the certainty of the faith. Therefore, firmly confiding in the long-suffering of the Divine clemency, we believe that, through the ministry of your preaching, there will ensue most full salvation not only of the nations subject to him, but also of their neighbours; to the end, that as it is written, the recompense of a perfect work may be conferred on you by the Lord, the Rewarder of all the just; and that the universal confession of all nations, having received the mystery of the Christian faith, may declare, that in truth ‘Their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.’

“We have also, my brother, moved by the warmth of our goodwill, sent you by the bearer of these presents, the pall, giving you authority to use it

only in the celebration of the Sacred Mysteries; granting to you likewise to ordain bishops when there shall be occasion, through the Lord's mercy; that so the Gospel of Christ, by the preaching of many, may be spread abroad in all the nations that are not yet converted. You must, therefore, endeavour, my brother, to preserve with unblemished sincerity of mind that which you have received through the kindness of the Apostolic see, bearing in mind what it is that is represented by the honourable vestment which you have obtained to be borne on your shoulders. And imploring the Divine mercy, study to show yourself such that you may present before the tribunal of the Supreme Judge that is to come, the rewards of the favour granted to you, not with guiltiness, but with the benefit of souls.

“God preserve you in safety, most dear brother!”

Chap. IX.

Of the reign of King Edwin, and how Paulinus, coming to preach the Gospel, first converted his daughter and others to the mysteries of the faith of Christ. [625-626 a.d.]

At this time the nation of the Northumbrians, that is, the English tribe dwelling on the north side of the river Humber, with their king, Edwin, received the Word of faith through the preaching of Paulinus, of whom we have before spoken. This king, as an earnest of his reception of the faith, and his share in the heavenly kingdom, received an increase also of his temporal realm, for he reduced under his dominion all the parts of Britain that were provinces either of the English, or of the Britons, a thing which no English king had ever done before; and he even subjected to the English the Mevanian islands, as has been said above. The more important of these, which is to the southward, is the larger in extent, and more fruitful, containing nine hundred and sixty families, according to the English computation; the other contains above three hundred.

The occasion of this nation's reception of the faith was the alliance by marriage of their aforesaid king with the kings of Kent, for he had taken to wife Ethelberg, otherwise called Tata, daughter to King Ethelbert. When he first sent ambassadors to ask her in marriage of her brother Eadbald, who then reigned in Kent, he received the answer, "That it was not lawful to give a Christian maiden in marriage to a pagan husband, lest the faith and the mysteries of the heavenly King should be profaned by her union with a king that was altogether a stranger to the worship of the true God." This answer being brought to Edwin by his messengers, he promised that he would in no manner act in opposition to the Christian faith, which the maiden professed; but would give leave to her, and all that went with her, men and women, bishops and clergy, to follow their faith and worship after the custom of the Christians. Nor did he refuse to accept that religion himself, if, being examined by wise men, it should be found more holy and more worthy of God.

So the maiden was promised, and sent to Edwin, and in accordance with the agreement, Paulinus, a man beloved of God, was ordained bishop, to go with her, and by daily exhortations, and celebrating the heavenly Mysteries, to confirm her and her company, lest they should be corrupted by intercourse with the pagans. Paulinus was ordained bishop by the Archbishop Justus, on the 21st day of July, in the year of our Lord 625, and so came to King Edwin with the aforesaid maiden as an attendant on their union in the flesh. But his mind was wholly bent upon calling the nation to which he was sent to the knowledge of truth; according to the words of the Apostle, "To espouse her to the one true Husband, that he might present her as a chaste virgin to Christ."

Being come into that province, he laboured much, not only to retain those that went with him, by the help of God, that they should not abandon the faith, but, if haply he might, to convert some of the pagans to the grace of the faith by his preaching. But, as the Apostle says, though he laboured long in the Word, "The god of this world blinded the minds of them that believed not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them."

The next year there came into the province one called Eumer, sent by the king of the West-Saxons, whose name was Cuichelm, to lie in wait for King Edwin, in hopes at once to deprive him of his kingdom and his life. He had a two-edged dagger, dipped in poison, to the end that, if the wound inflicted by the weapon did not avail to kill the king, it might be aided by the deadly venom. He came to the king on the first day of the Easter festival, at the river Derwent, where there was then a royal township, and being admitted as if to deliver a message from his master, whilst unfolding in cunning words his pretended embassy, he started up on a sudden, and unsheathing the dagger under his garment, assaulted the king. When Lilla, the king's most devoted servant, saw this, having no buckler at hand to protect the king from death, he at once interposed his own body to receive the blow; but the enemy struck home with such force, that he wounded the king through the body of the slaughtered thegn. Being then attacked on all sides with swords, in the confusion he also slew impiously with his dagger another of the thegns, whose name was Forthhere.

On that same holy Easter night, the queen had brought forth to the king a daughter, called Eanfled. The king, in the presence of Bishop Paulinus, gave thanks to his gods for the birth of his daughter; and the bishop, on his part, began to give thanks to Christ, and to tell the king, that by his prayers to Him he had obtained that the queen should bring forth the child in safety, and without grievous pain. The king, delighted with his words, promised, that if God would grant him life and victory over the king by whom the murderer who had wounded him had been sent, he would renounce his idols, and serve Christ; and as a pledge that he would perform his promise, he delivered up that same daughter to Bishop Paulinus, to be consecrated to Christ. She was the first to be baptized of the nation of the Northumbrians, and she received Baptism on the holy day of Pentecost, along with eleven others of her house. At that time, the king, being recovered of the wound which he had received, raised an army and marched against the nation of the West-Saxons; and engaging in war, either slew or received in surrender all those of whom he learned that they had conspired to murder him. So he returned victorious into his own country, but he would not immediately and unadvisedly embrace the mysteries of the Christian faith, though he no longer worshipped idols, ever since he made the promise that he would serve Christ; but first took heed earnestly to be instructed at leisure by the venerable Paulinus, in the knowledge of faith, and to confer with such as he knew to be the wisest of his chief men, inquiring what they thought was fittest to be done in that case. And

being a man of great natural sagacity, he often sat alone by himself a long time in silence, deliberating in the depths of his heart how he should proceed, and to which religion he should adhere.

Chap. X.

How Pope Boniface, by letter, exhorted the same king to embrace the faith. [*Circ. 625 a.d.*]

At this time he received a letter from Pope Boniface exhorting him to embrace the faith, which was as follows:

COPY OF THE LETTER OF THE MOST BLESSED AND APOSTOLIC POPE OF THE CHURCH OF THE CITY OF ROME, BONIFACE, ADDRESSED TO THE ILLUSTRIOUS EDWIN, KING OF THE ENGLISH.

“To the illustrious Edwin, king of the English, Bishop Boniface, the servant of the servants of God. Although the power of the Supreme Deity cannot be expressed by the function of human speech, seeing that, by its own greatness, it so consists in invisible and unsearchable eternity, that no keenness of wit can comprehend or express how great it is; yet inasmuch as His Humanity, having opened the doors of the heart to receive Himself, mercifully, by secret inspiration, puts into the minds of men such things as It reveals concerning Itself, we have thought fit to extend our episcopal care so far as to make known to you the fulness of the Christian faith; to the end that, bringing to your knowledge the Gospel of Christ, which our Saviour commanded should be preached to all nations, we might offer to you the cup of the means of salvation.

“Thus the goodness of the Supreme Majesty, which, by the word alone of His command, made and created all things, the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, disposing the order by which they should subsist, hath, ordaining all things, with the counsel of His co-eternal Word, and the unity of the Holy Spirit, made man after His own image and likeness, forming him out of the mire of the earth; and granted him such high privilege of distinction, as to place him above all else; so that, preserving the bounds of the law of his being, his substance should be established to eternity. This God, — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the undivided Trinity, — from the east unto the west, through faith by confession to the saving of their souls, men worship and adore as the Creator of all things, and their own Maker; to Whom also the heights of empire and the powers of the world are subject, because the pre-eminence of all kingdoms is granted by His disposition. It hath pleased Him, therefore, in the mercy of His loving kindness, and for the greater benefit of all His creatures, by the fire of His Holy Spirit wonderfully to kindle the cold hearts even of the nations seated at the extremities of the earth in the knowledge of Himself.

“For we suppose, since the two countries are near together, that your Highness has fully understood what the clemency of our Redeemer has effected in the enlightenment of our illustrious son, King Eadbald, and the nations under his rule; we therefore trust, with assured confidence that,

through the long-suffering of Heaven, His wonderful gift will be also conferred on you; since, indeed, we have learnt that your illustrious consort, who is discerned to be one flesh with you, has been blessed with the reward of eternity, through the regeneration of Holy Baptism. We have, therefore, taken care by this letter, with all the goodwill of heartfelt love, to exhort your Highness, that, abhorring idols and their worship, and despising the foolishness of temples, and the deceitful flatteries of auguries, you believe in God the Father Almighty, and His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, to the end that, believing and being released from the bonds of captivity to the Devil, you may, through the co-operating power of the Holy and undivided Trinity, be partaker of the eternal life.

“How great guilt they lie under, who adhere in their worship to the pernicious superstition of idolatry, appears by the examples of the perishing of those whom they worship. Wherefore it is said of them by the Psalmist, ‘All the gods of the nations are devils, but the Lord made the heavens.’ And again, ‘Eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not; they have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not. Therefore they are made like unto those that place the hope of their confidence in them.’ For how can they have power to help any man, that are made out of corruptible matter, by the hands of your inferiors and subjects, and on which, by employing human art, you have bestowed a lifeless similitude of members? which, moreover, unless they be moved by you, will not be able to walk; but, like a stone fixed in one place, being so formed, and having no understanding, sunk in insensibility, have no power of doing harm or good. We cannot, therefore, by any manner of discernment conceive how you come to be so deceived as to follow and worship those gods, to whom you yourselves have given the likeness of a body.

“It behoves you, therefore, by taking upon you the sign of the Holy Cross, by which the human race has been redeemed, to root out of your hearts all the accursed deceitfulness of the snares of the Devil, who is ever the jealous foe of the works of the Divine Goodness, and to put forth your hands and with all your might set to work to break in pieces and destroy those which you have hitherto fashioned of wood or stone to be your gods. For the very destruction and decay of these, which never had the breath of life in them, nor could in any wise receive feeling from their makers, may plainly teach you how worthless that was which you hitherto worshipped. For you yourselves, who have received the breath of life from the Lord, are certainly better than these which are wrought with hands, seeing that Almighty God has appointed you to be descended, after many ages and through many generations, from the first man whom he formed. Draw near, then, to the knowledge of Him Who created you, Who breathed the breath of life into you, Who sent His only-begotten Son for your redemption, to save you from original sin, that being delivered from the power of the Devil’s perversity and wickedness, He might bestow on you a heavenly reward.

“Hearken to the words of the preachers, and the Gospel of God, which they declare to you, to the end that, believing, as has been said before more than once, in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ His Son, and the Holy Ghost, and the indivisible Trinity, having put to flight the thoughts of devils, and driven from you the temptations of the venomous and deceitful enemy, and being born again of water and the Holy Ghost, you may, through the aid of His bounty, dwell in the brightness of eternal glory with Him in Whom you shall have believed.

“We have, moreover, sent you the blessing of your protector, the blessed Peter, chief of the Apostles, to wit, a shirt of proof with one gold ornament, and one cloak of Ancyra, which we pray your Highness to accept with all the goodwill with which it is sent by us.”

Chap. XI.

How Pope Boniface advised the king's consort to use her best endeavours for his salvation. [Circ.625 a.d.]

The same pope also wrote to King Edwin's consort, Ethelberg, to this effect:

THE COPY OF THE LETTER OF THE MOST BLESSED AND APOSTOLIC BONIFACE, POPE OF THE CITY OF ROME, TO ETHELBERG, KING EDWIN'S QUEEN.

"To the illustrious lady his daughter, Queen Ethelberg, Boniface, bishop, servant of the servants of God. The goodness of our Redeemer has in His abundant Providence offered the means of salvation to the human race, which He rescued, by the shedding of His precious Blood, from the bonds of captivity to the Devil; to the end that, when He had made known His name in divers ways to the nations, they might acknowledge their Creator by embracing the mystery of the Christian faith. And this the mystical purification of your regeneration plainly shows to have been bestowed upon the mind of your Highness by God's gift. Our heart, therefore, has greatly rejoiced in the benefit bestowed by the bounty of the Lord, for that He has vouchsafed, in your confession, to kindle a spark of the orthodox religion, by which He might the more easily inflame with the love of Himself the understanding, not only of your illustrious consort, but also of all the nation that is subject to you.

"For we have been informed by those, who came to acquaint us with the laudable conversion of our illustrious son, King Eadbald, that your Highness, also, having received the wonderful mystery of the Christian faith, continually excels in the performance of works pious and acceptable to God; that you likewise carefully refrain from the worship of idols, and the deceits of temples and auguries, and with unimpaired devotion, give yourself so wholly to the love of your Redeemer, as never to cease from lending your aid in spreading the Christian faith. But when our fatherly love earnestly inquired concerning your illustrious consort, we were given to understand, that he still served abominable idols, and delayed to yield obedience in giving ear to the voice of the preachers. This occasioned us no small grief, that he that is one flesh with you still remained a stranger to the knowledge of the supreme and undivided Trinity. Whereupon we, in our fatherly care, have not delayed to admonish and exhort your Christian Highness, to the end that, filled with the support of the Divine inspiration, you should not defer to strive, both in season and out of season, that with the co-operating power of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, your husband also may be added to the number of Christians; that so you may uphold the rights of marriage in the bond of a holy and unblemished union. For it is written, 'They twain shall be one flesh.' How then can it be said, that there is unity in the bond between you, if he continues a stranger to

the brightness of your faith, separated from it by the darkness of detestable error?

“Wherefore, applying yourself continually to prayer, do not cease to beg of the long-suffering of the Divine Mercy the benefits of his illumination; to the end, that those whom the union of carnal affection has manifestly made in a manner to be one body, may, after this life continue in perpetual fellowship, by the unity of faith. Persist, therefore, illustrious daughter, and to the utmost of your power endeavour to soften the hardness of his heart by carefully making known to him the Divine precepts; pouring into his mind a knowledge of the greatness of that mystery which you have received by faith, and of the marvellous reward which, by the new birth, you have been made worthy to obtain. Inflammé the coldness of his heart by the message of the Holy Ghost, that he may put from him the deadness of an evil worship, and the warmth of the Divine faith may kindle his understanding through your frequent exhortations; and so the testimony of Holy Scripture may shine forth clearly, fulfilled by you, ‘The unbelieving husband shall be saved by the believing wife.’ For to this end you have obtained the mercy of the Lord’s goodness, that you might restore with increase to your Redeemer the fruit of faith and of the benefits entrusted to your hands. That you may be able to fulfil this task, supported by the help of His loving kindness we do not cease to implore with frequent prayers.

“Having premised thus much, in pursuance of the duty of our fatherly affection, we exhort you, that when the opportunity of a bearer shall offer, you will with all speed comfort us with the glad tidings of the wonderful work which the heavenly Power shall vouchsafe to perform by your means in the conversion of your consort, and of the nation subject to you; to the end, that our solicitude, which earnestly awaits the fulfilment of its desire in the soul’s salvation of you and yours, may, by hearing from you, be set at rest; and that we, discerning more fully the light of the Divine propitiation shed abroad in you, may with a joyful confession abundantly return due thanks to God, the Giver of all good things, and to the blessed Peter, the chief of the Apostles.

“We have, moreover, sent you the blessing of your protector, the blessed Peter, the chief of the Apostles, to wit, a silver looking-glass, and a gilded ivory comb, which we pray your Highness to accept with all the goodwill with which it is sent by us.”

Chap. XII.

How Edwin was persuaded to believe by a vision which he had once seen when he was in exile. [*Circ. 616 a.d.*]

Thus wrote the aforesaid Pope Boniface for the salvation of King Edwin and his nation. But a heavenly vision, which the Divine Goodness was pleased once to reveal to this king, when he was in banishment at the court of Redwald, king of the Angles, was of no little use in urging him to receive and understand the doctrines of salvation. For when Paulinus perceived that it was a difficult task to incline the king's proud mind to the humility of the way of salvation and the reception of the mystery of the life-giving Cross, and at the same time was employing the word of exhortation with men, and prayer to the Divine Goodness, for the salvation of Edwin and his subjects; at length, as we may suppose, it was shown him in spirit what the nature of the vision was that had been formerly revealed from Heaven to the king. Then he lost no time, but immediately admonished the king to perform the vow which he had made, when he received the vision, promising to fulfil it, if he should be delivered from the troubles of that time, and advanced to the throne.

The vision was this. When Ethelfrid, his predecessor, was persecuting him, he wandered for many years as an exile, hiding in divers places and kingdoms, and at last came to Redwald, beseeching him to give him protection against the snares of his powerful persecutor. Redwald willingly received him, and promised to perform what was asked of him. But when Ethelfrid understood that he had appeared in that province, and that he and his companions were hospitably entertained by Redwald, he sent messengers to bribe that king with a great sum of money to murder him, but without effect. He sent a second and a third time, offering a greater bribe each time, and, moreover, threatening to make war on him if his offer should be despised. Redwald, whether terrified by his threats, or won over by his gifts, complied with this request, and promised either to kill Edwin, or to deliver him up to the envoys. A faithful friend of his, hearing of this, went into his chamber, where he was going to bed, for it was the first hour of the night; and calling him out, told him what the king had promised to do with him, adding, "If, therefore, you are willing, I will this very hour conduct you out of this province, and lead you to a place where neither Redwald nor Ethelfrid shall ever find you." He answered, "I thank you for your good will, yet I cannot do what you propose, and be guilty of being the first to break the compact I have made with so great a king, when he has done me no harm, nor shown any enmity to me; but, on the contrary, if I must die, let it rather be by his hand than by that of any meaner man. For whither shall I now fly, when I have for so many long years been a vagabond through all the provinces of Britain, to escape the snares of my enemies?" His friend went away; Edwin remained

alone without, and sitting with a heavy heart before the palace, began to be overwhelmed with many thoughts, not knowing what to do, or which way to turn.

When he had remained a long time in silent anguish of mind, consumed with inward fire, on a sudden in the stillness of the dead of night he saw approaching a person, whose face and habit were strange to him, at sight of whom, seeing that he was unknown and unlooked for, he was not a little startled. The stranger coming close up, saluted him, and asked why he sat there in solitude on a stone troubled and wakeful at that time, when all others were taking their rest, and were fast asleep. Edwin, in his turn, asked, what it was to him, whether he spent the night within doors or abroad. The stranger, in reply, said, "Do not think that I am ignorant of the cause of your grief, your watching, and sitting alone without. For I know of a surety who you are, and why you grieve, and the evils which you fear will soon fall upon you. But tell me, what reward you would give the man who should deliver you out of these troubles, and persuade Redwald neither to do you any harm himself, nor to deliver you up to be murdered by your enemies." Edwin replied, that he would give such an one all that he could in return for so great a benefit. The other further added, "What if he should also assure you, that your enemies should be destroyed, and you should be a king surpassing in power, not only all your own ancestors, but even all that have reigned before you in the English nation?" Edwin, encouraged by these questions, did not hesitate to promise that he would make a fitting return to him who should confer such benefits upon him. Then the other spoke a third time and said, "But if he who should truly foretell that all these great blessings are about to befall you, could also give you better and more profitable counsel for your life and salvation than any of your fathers or kindred ever heard, do you consent to submit to him, and to follow his wholesome guidance?" Edwin at once promised that he would in all things follow the teaching of that man who should deliver him from so many great calamities, and raise him to a throne.

Having received this answer, the man who talked to him laid his right hand on his head saying, "When this sign shall be given you, remember this present discourse that has passed between us, and do not delay the performance of what you now promise." Having uttered these words, he is said to have immediately vanished. So the king perceived that it was not a man, but a spirit, that had appeared to him.

Whilst the royal youth still sat there alone, glad of the comfort he had received, but still troubled and earnestly pondering who he was, and whence he came, that had so talked to him, his aforesaid friend came to him, and greeting him with a glad countenance, "Rise," said he, "go in; calm and put away your anxious cares, and compose yourself in body and mind to sleep; for the king's resolution is altered, and he designs to do you no harm, but rather to keep his pledged faith; for when he had privately made known to the queen his intention of doing what I told you before, she dissuaded him from it,

reminding him that it was altogether unworthy of so great a king to sell his good friend in such distress for gold, and to sacrifice his honour, which is more valuable than all other adornments, for the love of money." In short, the king did as has been said, and not only refused to deliver up the banished man to his enemy's messengers, but helped him to recover his kingdom. For as soon as the messengers had returned home, he raised a mighty army to subdue Ethelfrid; who, meeting him with much inferior forces, (for Redwald had not given him time to gather and unite all his power,) was slain on the borders of the kingdom of Mercia, on the east side of the river that is called Idle. In this battle, Redwald's son, called Raegenheri, was killed. Thus Edwin, in accordance with the prophecy he had received, not only escaped the danger from his enemy, but, by his death, succeeded the king on the throne.

King Edwin, therefore, delaying to receive the Word of God at the preaching of Paulinus, and being wont for some time, as has been said, to sit many hours alone, and seriously to ponder with himself what he was to do, and what religion he was to follow, the man of God came to him one day, laid his right hand on his head, and asked, whether he knew that sign? The king, trembling, was ready to fall down at his feet, but he raised him up, and speaking to him with the voice of a friend, said, "Behold, by the gift of God you have escaped the hands of the enemies whom you feared. Behold, you have obtained of His bounty the kingdom which you desired. Take heed not to delay to perform your third promise; accept the faith, and keep the precepts of Him Who, delivering you from temporal adversity, has raised you to the honour of a temporal kingdom; and if, from this time forward, you shall be obedient to His will, which through me He signifies to you, He will also deliver you from the everlasting torments of the wicked, and make you partaker with Him of His eternal kingdom in heaven."

Chap. XIII.

Of the Council he held with his chief men concerning their reception of the faith of Christ, and how the high priest profaned his own altars. [627 a.d.]

The king, hearing these words, answered, that he was both willing and bound to receive the faith which Paulinus taught; but that he would confer about it with his chief friends and counsellors, to the end that if they also were of his opinion, they might all together be consecrated to Christ in the font of life. Paulinus consenting, the king did as he said; for, holding a council with the wise men, he asked of every one in particular what he thought of this doctrine hitherto unknown to them, and the new worship of God that was preached? The chief of his own priests, Coifi, immediately answered him, "O king, consider what this is which is now preached to us; for I verily declare to you what I have learnt beyond doubt, that the religion which we have hitherto professed has no virtue in it and no profit. For none of your people has applied himself more diligently to the worship of our gods than I; and yet there are many who receive greater favours from you, and are more preferred than I, and are more prosperous in all that they undertake to do or to get. Now if the gods were good for any thing, they would rather forward me, who have been careful to serve them with greater zeal. It remains, therefore, that if upon examination you find those new doctrines, which are now preached to us, better and more efficacious, we hasten to receive them without any delay."

Another of the king's chief men, approving of his wise words and exhortations, added thereafter: "The present life of man upon earth, O king, seems to me, in comparison with that time which is unknown to us, like to the swift flight of a sparrow through the house wherein you sit at supper in winter, with your ealdormen and thegns, while the fire blazes in the midst, and the hall is warmed, but the wintry storms of rain or snow are raging abroad. The sparrow, flying in at one door and immediately out at another, whilst he is within, is safe from the wintry tempest; but after a short space of fair weather, he immediately vanishes out of your sight, passing from winter into winter again. So this life of man appears for a little while, but of what is to follow or what went before we know nothing at all. If, therefore, this new doctrine tells us something more certain, it seems justly to deserve to be followed." The other elders and king's counsellors, by Divine prompting, spoke to the same effect.

But Coifi added, that he wished more attentively to hear Paulinus discourse concerning the God Whom he preached. When he did so, at the king's command, Coifi, hearing his words, cried out, "This long time I have perceived that what we worshipped was naught; because the more diligently I sought after truth in that worship, the less I found it. But now I freely confess, that such truth evidently appears in this preaching as can confer on us the gifts

of life, of salvation, and of eternal happiness. For which reason my counsel is, O king, that we instantly give up to ban and fire those temples and altars which we have consecrated without reaping any benefit from them.” In brief, the king openly assented to the preaching of the Gospel by Paulinus, and renouncing idolatry, declared that he received the faith of Christ: and when he inquired of the aforesaid high priest of his religion, who should first desecrate the altars and temples of their idols, with the precincts that were about them, he answered, “I; for who can more fittingly than myself destroy those things which I worshipped in my folly, for an example to all others, through the wisdom which has been given me by the true God?” Then immediately, in contempt of his vain superstitions, he desired the king to furnish him with arms and a stallion, that he might mount and go forth to destroy the idols; for it was not lawful before for the high priest either to carry arms, or to ride on anything but a mare. Having, therefore, girt a sword about him, with a spear in his hand, he mounted the king’s stallion, and went his way to the idols. The multitude, beholding it, thought that he was mad; but as soon as he drew near the temple he did not delay to desecrate it by casting into it the spear which he held; and rejoicing in the knowledge of the worship of the true God, he commanded his companions to tear down and set on fire the temple, with all its precincts. This place where the idols once stood is still shown, not far from York, to the eastward, beyond the river Derwent, and is now called Godmunddingaham, where the high priest, by the inspiration of the true God, profaned and destroyed the altars which he had himself consecrated.

Chap. XIV.

How King Edwin and his nation became Christians; and where Paulinus baptized them. [627 a.d.]

King Edwin, therefore, with all the nobility of the nation, and a large number of the common sort, received the faith, and the washing of holy regeneration, in the eleventh year of his reign, which is the year of our Lord 627, and about one hundred and eighty after the coming of the English into Britain. He was baptized at York, on the holy day of Easter, being the 12th of April, in the church of St. Peter the Apostle, which he himself had built of timber there in haste, whilst he was a catechumen receiving instruction in order to be admitted to baptism. In that city also he bestowed upon his instructor and bishop, Paulinus, his episcopal see. But as soon as he was baptized, he set about building, by the direction of Paulinus, in the same place a larger and nobler church of stone, in the midst whereof the oratory which he had first erected should be enclosed. Having, therefore, laid the foundation, he began to build the church square, encompassing the former oratory. But before the walls were raised to their full height, the cruel death of the king left that work to be finished by Oswald his successor. Paulinus, for the space of six years from this time, that is, till the end of the king's reign, with his consent and favour, preached the Word of God in that country, and as many as were foreordained to eternal life believed and were baptized. Among them were Osfrid and Eadfrid, King Edwin's sons who were both born to him, whilst he was in banishment, of Quenburga, the daughter of Cearl, king of the Mercians.

Afterwards other children of his, by Queen Ethelberg, were baptized, Ethelhun and his daughter Ethelthryth, and another, Wuscfrea, a son; the first two were snatched out of this life whilst they were still in the white garments of the newly-baptized, and buried in the church at York. Yffi, the son of Osfrid, was also baptized, and many other noble and royal persons. So great was then the fervour of the faith, as is reported, and the desire for the laver of salvation among the nation of the Northumbrians, that Paulinus at a certain time coming with the king and queen to the royal township, which is called Adgefrin, stayed there with them thirty-six days, fully occupied in catechizing and baptizing; during which days, from morning till night, he did nothing else but instruct the people resorting from all villages and places, in Christ's saving Word; and when they were instructed, he washed them with the water of absolution in the river Glen, which is close by. This township, under the following kings, was abandoned, and another was built instead of it, at the place called Maelmin.

These things happened in the province of the Bernicians; but in that of the Deiri also, where he was wont often to be with the king, he baptized in the

river Swale, which runs by the village of Cataract; for as yet oratories, or baptisteries, could not be built in the early infancy of the Church in those parts. But in Campodonum, where there was then a royal township, he built a church which the pagans, by whom King Edwin was slain, afterwards burnt, together with all the place. Instead of this royal seat the later kings built themselves a township in the country called Loidis. But the altar, being of stone, escaped the fire and is still preserved in the monastery of the most reverend abbot and priest, Thrydwulf, which is in the forest of Elmet.

Chap. XV.

How the province of the East Angles received the faith of Christ. [627-628 a.d.]

Edwin was so zealous for the true worship, that he likewise persuaded Earpwald, king of the East Angles, and son of Redwald, to abandon his idolatrous superstitions, and with his whole province to receive the faith and mysteries of Christ. And indeed his father Redwald had long before been initiated into the mysteries of the Christian faith in Kent, but in vain; for on his return home, he was seduced by his wife and certain perverse teachers, and turned aside from the sincerity of the faith; and thus his latter state was worse than the former; so that, like the Samaritans of old, he seemed at the same time to serve Christ and the gods whom he served before; and in the same temple he had an altar for the Christian Sacrifice, and another small one at which to offer victims to devils. Aldwulf, king of that same province, who lived in our time, testifies that this temple had stood until his time, and that he had seen it when he was a boy. The aforesaid King Redwald was noble by birth, though ignoble in his actions, being the son of Tytilus, whose father was Uuffa, from whom the kings of the East Angles are called Uuffings.

Earpwald, not long after he had embraced the Christian faith, was slain by one Ricbert, a pagan; and from that time the province was in error for three years, till Sigbert succeeded to the kingdom, brother to the same Earpwald, a most Christian and learned man, who was banished, and went to live in Gaul during his brother's life, and was there initiated into the mysteries of the faith, whereof he made it his business to cause all his province to partake as soon as he came to the throne. His exertions were nobly promoted by Bishop Felix, who, coming to Honorius, the archbishop, from the parts of Burgundy, where he had been born and ordained, and having told him what he desired, was sent by him to preach the Word of life to the aforesaid nation of the Angles. Nor were his good wishes in vain; for the pious labourer in the spiritual field reaped therein a great harvest of believers, delivering all that province (according to the inner signification of his name) from long iniquity and unhappiness, and bringing it to the faith and works of righteousness, and the gifts of everlasting happiness. He had the see of his bishopric appointed him in the city Dommoc, and having presided over the same province with pontifical authority seventeen years, he ended his days there in peace.

Chap. XVI.

How Paulinus preached in the province of Lindsey; and of the character of the reign of Edwin. [*Circ. 628 a.d.*]

Paulinus also preached the Word to the province of Lindsey, which is the first on the south side of the river Humber, stretching as far as the sea; and he first converted to the Lord the reeve of the city of Lincoln, whose name was Blaecca, with his whole house. He likewise built, in that city, a stone church of beautiful workmanship; the roof of which has either fallen through long neglect, or been thrown down by enemies, but the walls are still to be seen standing, and every year miraculous cures are wrought in that place, for the benefit of those who have faith to seek them. In that church, when Justus had departed to Christ, Paulinus consecrated Honorius bishop in his stead, as will be hereafter mentioned in its proper place. A certain priest and abbot of the monastery of Peartaneu, a man of singular veracity, whose name was Deda, told me concerning the faith of this province that an old man had informed him that he himself had been baptized at noon-day, by Bishop Paulinus, in the presence of King Edwin, and with him a great multitude of the people, in the river Trent, near the city, which in the English tongue is called Tiouulfingacaestir; and he was also wont to describe the person of the same Paulinus, saying that he was tall of stature, stooping somewhat, his hair black, his visage thin, his nose slender and aquiline, his aspect both venerable and awe-inspiring. He had also with him in the ministry, James, the deacon, a man of zeal and great fame in Christ and in the church, who lived even to our days.

It is told that there was then such perfect peace in Britain, wheresoever the dominion of King Edwin extended, that, as is still proverbially said, a woman with her new-born babe might walk throughout the island, from sea to sea, without receiving any harm. That king took such care for the good of his nation, that in several places where he had seen clear springs near the highways, he caused stakes to be fixed, with copper drinking-vessels hanging on them, for the refreshment of travellers; nor durst any man touch them for any other purpose than that for which they were designed, either through the great dread they had of the king, or for the affection which they bore him. His dignity was so great throughout his dominions, that not only were his banners borne before him in battle, but even in time of peace, when he rode about his cities, townships, or provinces, with his thegns, the standard-bearer was always wont to go before him. Also, when he walked anywhere along the streets, that sort of banner which the Romans call Tufa, and the English, Thuuf, was in like manner borne before him.

Chap. XVII.

How Edwin received letters of exhortation from Pope Honorius, who also sent the pall to Paulinus. [634 a.d.]

At that time Honorius, successor to Boniface, was Bishop of the Apostolic see. When he learned that the nation of the Northumbrians, with their king, had been, by the preaching of Paulinus, converted to the faith and confession of Christ, he sent the pall to the said Paulinus, and with it letters of exhortation to King Edwin, with fatherly love inflaming his zeal, to the end that he and his people should persist in belief of the truth which they had received. The contents of which letter were as follow:

“To his most noble son, and excellent lord, Edwin king of the Angles, Bishop Honorius, servant of the servants of God, greeting. The wholeheartedness of your Christian Majesty, in the worship of your Creator, is so inflamed with the fire of faith, that it shines out far and wide, and, being reported throughout the world, brings forth plentiful fruits of your labours. For the terms of your kingship you know to be this, that taught by orthodox preaching the knowledge of your King and Creator, you believe and worship God, and as far as man is able, pay Him the sincere devotion of your mind. For what else are we able to offer to our God, but our readiness to worship Him and to pay Him our vows, persisting in good actions, and confessing Him the Creator of mankind? And, therefore, most excellent son, we exhort you with such fatherly love as is meet, to labour to preserve this gift in every way, by earnest striving and constant prayer, in that the Divine Mercy has vouchsafed to call you to His grace; to the end that He, Who has been pleased to deliver you from all errors, and bring you to the knowledge of His name in this present world, may likewise prepare a place for you in the heavenly country. Employing yourself, therefore, in reading frequently the works of my lord Gregory, your Evangelist, of apostolic memory, keep before your eyes that love of his doctrine, which he zealously bestowed for the sake of your souls; that his prayers may exalt your kingdom and people, and present you faultless before Almighty God. We are preparing with a willing mind immediately to grant those things which you hoped would be by us ordained for your bishops, and this we do on account of the sincerity of your faith, which has been made known to us abundantly in terms of praise by the bearers of these presents. We have sent two palls to the two metropolitans, Honorius and Paulinus; to the intent, that when either of them shall be called out of this world to his Creator, the other may, by this authority of ours, substitute another bishop in his place; which privilege we are induced to grant by the warmth of our love for you, as well as by reason of the great extent of the provinces which lie between us and you; that we may in all things support your devotion and likewise satisfy your desires. May God’s grace preserve

your Highness in safety!”

Chap. XVIII.

How Honorius, who succeeded Justus in the bishopric of Canterbury, received the pall and letters from Pope Honorius. [634 a.d.]

In the meantime, Archbishop Justus was taken up to the heavenly kingdom, on the 10th of November, and Honorius, who was elected to the see in his stead, came to Paulinus to be ordained, and meeting him at Lincoln was there consecrated the fifth prelate of the Church of Canterbury from Augustine. To him also the aforesaid Pope Honorius sent the pall, and a letter, wherein he ordains the same that he had before ordained in his epistle to King Edwin, to wit, that when either the Archbishop of Canterbury or of York shall depart this life, the survivor, being of the same degree, shall have power to ordain another bishop in the room of him that is departed; that it might not be necessary always to undertake the toilsome journey to Rome, at so great a distance by sea and land, to ordain an archbishop. Which letter we have also thought fit to insert in this our history:

“Honorius to his most beloved brother Honorius: Among the many good gifts which the mercy of our Redeemer is pleased to bestow on His servants He grants to us in His bounty, graciously conferred on us by His goodness, the special blessing of realizing by brotherly intercourse, as it were face to face, our mutual love. For which gift we continually render thanks to His Majesty; and we humbly beseech Him, that He will ever confirm your labour, beloved, in preaching the Gospel, and bringing forth fruit, and following the rule of your master and head, the holy Gregory; and that, for the advancement of His Church, He may by your means raise up further increase; to the end, that through faith and works, in the fear and love of God, what you and your predecessors have already gained from the seed sown by our lord Gregory, may grow strong and be further extended; that so the promises spoken by our Lord may hereafter be brought to pass in you; and that these words may summon you to everlasting happiness: ‘Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.’ And again, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.’ And we, most beloved brothers, sending you first these words of exhortation out of our enduring charity, do not fail further to grant those things which we perceive may be suitable for the privileges of your Churches.

“Wherefore, in accordance with your request, and that of the kings our sons, we do hereby in the name of the blessed Peter, chief of the Apostles, grant you authority, that when the Divine Grace shall call either of you to Himself, the survivor shall ordain a bishop in the room of him that is deceased. To which end also we have sent a pall to each of you, beloved, for celebrating the said ordination; that by the authority which we hereby commit

to you, you may make an ordination acceptable to God; because the long distance of sea and land that lies between us and you, has obliged us to grant you this, that no loss may happen to your Church in any way, on any pretext whatever, but that the devotion of the people committed to you may increase the more. God preserve you in safety, most dear brother! Given the 11th day of June, in the reign of these our lords and emperors, in the twenty-fourth year of the reign of Heraclius, and the twenty-third after his consulship; and in the twenty-third of his son Constantine, and the third after his consulship; and in the third year of the most prosperous Caesar, his son Heraclius, the seventh indiction; that is, in the year of our Lord, 634.”

Chap. XIX.

How the aforesaid Honorius first, and afterwards John, wrote letters to the nation of the Scots, concerning the observance of Easter, and the Pelagian heresy. [640 a.d.]

The same Pope Honorius also wrote to the Scots, whom he had found to err in the observance of the holy Festival of Easter, as has been shown above, with subtlety of argument exhorting them not to think themselves, few as they were, and placed in the utmost borders of the earth, wiser than all the ancient and modern Churches of Christ, throughout the world; and not to celebrate a different Easter, contrary to the Paschal calculation and the decrees of all the bishops upon earth sitting in synod. Likewise John, who succeeded Severinus, successor to the same Honorius, being yet but Pope elect, sent to them letters of great authority and erudition for the purpose of correcting the same error; evidently showing, that Easter Sunday is to be found between the fifteenth of the moon and the twenty-first, as was approved in the Council of Nicaea. He also in the same epistle admonished them to guard against the Pelagian heresy, and reject it, for he had been informed that it was again springing up among them. The beginning of the epistle was as follows:

“To our most beloved and most holy Tomianus, Columbanus, Cromanus, Dinnaus, and Baithanus, bishops; to Cromanus, Ernianus, Laistranus, Scellanus, and Segenus, priests; to Saranus and the rest of the Scottish doctors and abbots, Hilarus, the arch-presbyter, and vice-gerent of the holy Apostolic See; John, the deacon, and elect in the name of God; likewise John, the chief of the notaries and vice-gerent of the holy Apostolic See, and John, the servant of God, and counsellor of the same Apostolic See. The writings which were brought by the bearers to Pope Severinus, of holy memory, were left, when he departed from the light of this world, without an answer to the questions contained in them. Lest any obscurity should long remain undisputed in a matter of so great moment, we opened the same, and found that some in your province, endeavouring to revive a new heresy out of an old one, contrary to the orthodox faith, do through the darkness of their minds reject our Easter, when Christ was sacrificed; and contend that the same should be kept with the Hebrews on the fourteenth of the moon.”

By this beginning of the epistle it evidently appears that this heresy arose among them in very late times, and that not all their nation, but only some of them, were involved in the same.

After having laid down the manner of keeping Easter, they add this concerning the Pelagians in the same epistle:

“And we have also learnt that the poison of the Pelagian heresy again springs up among you; we, therefore, exhort you, that you put away from your thoughts all such venomous and superstitious wickedness. For you

cannot be ignorant how that execrable heresy has been condemned; for it has not only been abolished these two hundred years, but it is also daily condemned by us and buried under our perpetual ban; and we exhort you not to rake up the ashes of those whose weapons have been burnt. For who would not detest that insolent and impious assertion, 'That man can live without sin of his own free will, and not through the grace of God?' And in the first place, it is blasphemous folly to say that man is without sin, which none can be, but only the one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, Who was conceived and born without sin; for all other men, being born in original sin, are known to bear the mark of Adam's transgression, even whilst they are without actual sin, according to the saying of the prophet, 'For behold, I was conceived in iniquity; and in sin did my mother give birth to me.' "

Chap. XX.

How Edwin being slain, Paulinus returned into Kent, and had the bishopric of Rochester conferred upon him. [633 a.d.]

Edwin reigned most gloriously seventeen years over the nations of the English and the Britons, six whereof, as has been said, he also was a soldier in the kingdom of Christ. Caedwalla, king of the Britons, rebelled against him, being supported by the vigorous Penda, of the royal race of the Mercians, who from that time governed that nation for twenty-two years with varying success. A great battle being fought in the plain that is called Haethfelth, Edwin was killed on the 12th of October, in the year of our Lord 633, being then forty-eight years of age, and all his army was either slain or dispersed. In the same war also, Osfrid, one of his sons, a warlike youth, fell before him; Eadfrid, another of them, compelled by necessity, went over to King Penda, and was by him afterwards slain in the reign of Oswald, contrary to his oath. At this time a great slaughter was made in the Church and nation of the Northumbrians; chiefly because one of the chiefs, by whom it was carried on, was a pagan, and the other a barbarian, more cruel than a pagan; for Penda, with all the nation of the Mercians, was an idolater, and a stranger to the name of Christ; but Caedwalla, though he professed and called himself a Christian, was so barbarous in his disposition and manner of living, that he did not even spare women and innocent children, but with bestial cruelty put all alike to death by torture, and overran all their country in his fury for a long time, intending to cut off all the race of the English within the borders of Britain. Nor did he pay any respect to the Christian religion which had sprung up among them; it being to this day the custom of the Britons to despise the faith and religion of the English, and to have no part with them in anything any more than with pagans. King Edwin's head was brought to York, and afterwards taken into the church of the blessed Peter the Apostle, which he had begun, but which his successor Oswald finished, as has been said before. It was laid in the chapel of the holy Pope Gregory, from whose disciples he had received the word of life.

The affairs of the Northumbrians being thrown into confusion at the moment of this disaster, when there seemed to be no prospect of safety except in flight, Paulinus, taking with him Queen Ethelberg, whom he had before brought thither, returned into Kent by sea, and was very honourably received by the Archbishop Honorius and King Eadbald. He came thither under the conduct of Bassus, a most valiant thegn of King Edwin, having with him Eanfled, the daughter, and Wuscfrea, the son of Edwin, as well as Yffi, the son of Osfrid, Edwin's son. Afterwards Ethelberg, for fear of the kings Eadbald and Oswald, sent Wuscfrea and Yffi over into Gaul to be bred up by King Dagobert, who was her friend; and there they both died in infancy, and were

buried in the church with the honour due to royal children and to Christ's innocents. He also brought with him many rich goods of King Edwin, among which were a large gold cross, and a golden chalice, consecrated to the service of the altar, which are still preserved, and shown in the church of Canterbury.

At that time the church of Rochester had no pastor, for Romanus, the bishop thereof, being sent on a mission to Pope Honorius by Archbishop Justus, was drowned in the Italian Sea; and thus Paulinus, at the request of Archbishop Honorius and King Eadbald, took upon him the charge of the same, and held it until he too, in his own time, departed to heaven, with the fruits of his glorious labours; and, dying in that Church, he left there the pall which he had received from the Pope of Rome. He had left behind him in his Church at York, James, the deacon, a true churchman and a holy man, who continuing long after in that Church, by teaching and baptizing, rescued much prey from the ancient enemy; and from him the village, where he chiefly dwelt, near Cataract, has its name to this day. He had great skill in singing in church, and when the province was afterwards restored to peace, and the number of the faithful increased, he began to teach church music to many, according to the custom of the Romans, or of the Cantuarians. And being old and full of days, as the Scripture says, he went the way of his fathers.

Book III

Chap. I.

How King Edwin's next successors lost both the faith of their nation and the kingdom; but the most Christian King Oswald retrieved both. [633 a.d.]

Edwin being slain in battle, the kingdom of the Deiri, to which province his family belonged, and where he first began to reign, passed to Osric, the son of his uncle Aelfric, who, through the preaching of Paulinus, had also received the mysteries of the faith. But the kingdom of the Bernicians — for into these two provinces the nation of the Northumbrians was formerly divided — passed to Eanfrid, the son of Ethelfrid, who derived his origin from the royal family of that province. For all the time that Edwin reigned, the sons of the aforesaid Ethelfrid, who had reigned before him, with many of the younger nobility, lived in banishment among the Scots or Picts, and were there instructed according to the doctrine of the Scots, and were renewed with the grace of Baptism. Upon the death of the king, their enemy, they were allowed to return home, and the aforesaid Eanfrid, as the eldest of them, became king of the Bernicians. Both those kings, as soon as they obtained the government of their earthly kingdoms, abjured and betrayed the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom to which they had been admitted, and again delivered themselves up to defilement and perdition through the abominations of their former idolatry.

But soon after, the king of the Britons, Caedwalla, the unrighteous instrument of rightful vengeance, slew them both. First, in the following summer, he put Osric to death; for, being rashly besieged by him in the municipal town, he sallied out on a sudden with all his forces, took him by surprise, and destroyed him and all his army. Then, when he had occupied the provinces of the Northumbrians for a whole year, not ruling them like a victorious king, but ravaging them like a furious tyrant, he at length put an end to Eanfrid, in like manner, when he unadvisedly came to him with only twelve chosen soldiers, to sue for peace. To this day, that year is looked upon as ill-omened, and hateful to all good men; as well on account of the apostacy of the English kings, who had renounced the mysteries of the faith, as of the outrageous tyranny of the British king. Hence it has been generally agreed, in reckoning the dates of the kings, to abolish the memory of those faithless monarchs, and to assign that year to the reign of the following king, Oswald, a man beloved of God. This king, after the death of his brother Eanfrid, advanced with an army, small, indeed, in number, but strengthened with the faith of Christ; and the impious commander of the Britons, in spite of his vast forces, which he boasted nothing could withstand, was slain at a place called in the English tongue Denisesburna, that is, the brook of Denis.

Chap. II.

How, among innumerable other miracles of healing wrought by the wood of the cross, which King Oswald, being ready to engage against the barbarians, erected, a certain man had his injured arm healed. [634 a.d.]

The place is shown to this day, and held in much veneration, where Oswald, being about to engage in this battle, erected the symbol of the Holy Cross, and knelt down and prayed to God that he would send help from Heaven to his worshippers in their sore need. Then, we are told, that the cross being made in haste, and the hole dug in which it was to be set up, the king himself, in the ardour of his faith, laid hold of it and held it upright with both his hands, till the earth was heaped up by the soldiers and it was fixed. Thereupon, uplifting his voice, he cried to his whole army, "Let us all kneel, and together beseech the true and living God Almighty in His mercy to defend us from the proud and cruel enemy; for He knows that we have undertaken a just war for the safety of our nation." All did as he had commanded, and accordingly advancing towards the enemy with the first dawn of day, they obtained the victory, as their faith deserved. In the place where they prayed very many miracles of healing are known to have been wrought, as a token and memorial of the king's faith; for even to this day, many are wont to cut off small splinters from the wood of the holy cross, and put them into water, which they give to sick men or cattle to drink, or they sprinkle them therewith, and these are presently restored to health.

The place is called in the English tongue Hefenfelth, or the Heavenly Field, which name it undoubtedly received of old as a presage of what was afterwards to happen, denoting, that the heavenly trophy was to be erected, the heavenly victory begun, and heavenly miracles shown forth to this day. The place is near the wall in the north which the Romans formerly drew across the whole of Britain from sea to sea, to restrain the onslaught of the barbarous nations, as has been said before. Hither also the brothers of the church of Hagustald, which is not far distant, long ago made it their custom to resort every year, on the day before that on which King Oswald was afterwards slain, to keep vigils there for the health of his soul, and having sung many psalms of praise, to offer for him in the morning the sacrifice of the Holy Oblation. And since that good custom has spread, they have lately built a church there, which has attached additional sanctity and honour in the eyes of all men to that place; and this with good reason; for it appears that there was no symbol of the Christian faith, no church, no altar erected throughout all the nation of the Bernicians, before that new leader in war, prompted by the zeal of his faith, set up this standard of the Cross as he was going to give battle to his barbarous enemy.

Nor is it foreign to our purpose to relate one of the many miracles that have

been wrought at this cross. One of the brothers of the same church of Hagulstald, whose name is Bothelm, and who is still living, a few years ago, walking carelessly on the ice at night, suddenly fell and broke his arm; he was soon tormented with a most grievous pain in the broken part, so that he could not lift his arm to his mouth for the anguish. Hearing one morning that one of the brothers designed to go up to the place of the holy cross, he desired him, on his return, to bring him a piece of that sacred wood, saying, he believed that with the mercy of God he might thereby be healed. The brother did as he was desired; and returning in the evening, when the brothers were sitting at table, gave him some of the old moss which grew on the surface of the wood. As he sat at table, having no place to bestow the gift which was brought him, he put it into his bosom; and forgetting, when he went to bed, to put it away, left it in his bosom. Awaking in the middle of the night, he felt something cold lying by his side, and putting his hand upon it to feel what it was, he found his arm and hand as sound as if he had never felt any such pain.

Chap. III.

How the same king Oswald, asking a bishop of the Scottish nation, had Aidan sent him, and granted him an episcopal see in the Isle of Lindisfarne. [635 a.d.]

The same Oswald, as soon as he ascended the throne, being desirous that all the nation under his rule should be endued with the grace of the Christian faith, whereof he had found happy experience in vanquishing the barbarians, sent to the elders of the Scots, among whom himself and his followers, when in banishment, had received the sacrament of Baptism, desiring that they would send him a bishop, by whose instruction and ministry the English nation, which he governed, might learn the privileges and receive the Sacraments of the faith of our Lord. Nor were they slow in granting his request; for they sent him Bishop Aidan, a man of singular gentleness, piety, and moderation; having a zeal of God, but not fully according to knowledge; for he was wont to keep Easter Sunday according to the custom of his country, which we have before so often mentioned, from the fourteenth to the twentieth of the moon; the northern province of the Scots, and all the nation of the Picts, at that time still celebrating Easter after that manner, and believing that in this observance they followed the writings of the holy and praiseworthy Father Anatolius. Whether this be true, every instructed person can easily judge. But the Scots which dwelt in the South of Ireland had long since, by the admonition of the Bishop of the Apostolic see, learned to observe Easter according to the canonical custom.

On the arrival of the bishop, the king appointed him his episcopal see in the island of Lindisfarne, as he desired. Which place, as the tide ebbs and flows, is twice a day enclosed by the waves of the sea like an island; and again, twice, when the beach is left dry, becomes contiguous with the land. The king also humbly and willingly in all things giving ear to his admonitions, industriously applied himself to build up and extend the Church of Christ in his kingdom; wherein, when the bishop, who was not perfectly skilled in the English tongue, preached the Gospel, it was a fair sight to see the king himself interpreting the Word of God to his ealdormen and thegns, for he had thoroughly learned the language of the Scots during his long banishment. From that time many came daily into Britain from the country of the Scots, and with great devotion preached the Word to those provinces of the English, over which King Oswald reigned, and those among them that had received priest's orders, administered the grace of Baptism to the believers. Churches were built in divers places; the people joyfully flocked together to hear the Word; lands and other property were given of the king's bounty to found monasteries; English children, as well as their elders, were instructed by their Scottish teachers in study and the observance of monastic discipline. For most

of those who came to preach were monks. Bishop Aidan was himself a monk, having been sent out from the island called Hii, whereof the monastery was for a long time the chief of almost all those of the northern Scots, and all those of the Picts, and had the direction of their people. That island belongs to Britain, being divided from it by a small arm of the sea, but had been long since given by the Picts, who inhabit those parts of Britain, to the Scottish monks, because they had received the faith of Christ through their preaching.

Chap. IV.

When the nation of the Picts received the faith of Christ, [565 a.d.]

In the year of our Lord 565, when Justin, the younger, the successor of Justinian, obtained the government of the Roman empire, there came into Britain from Ireland a famous priest and abbot, marked as a monk by habit and manner of life, whose name was Columba, to preach the word of God to the provinces of the northern Picts, who are separated from the southern parts belonging to that nation by steep and rugged mountains. For the southern Picts, who dwell on this side of those mountains, had, it is said, long before forsaken the errors of idolatry, and received the true faith by the preaching of Bishop Ninias, a most reverend and holy man of the British nation, who had been regularly instructed at Rome in the faith and mysteries of the truth; whose episcopal see, named after St. Martin the bishop, and famous for a church dedicated to him (wherein Ninias himself and many other saints rest in the body), is now in the possession of the English nation. The place belongs to the province of the Bernicians, and is commonly called the White House, because he there built a church of stone, which was not usual among the Britons.

Columba came into Britain in the ninth year of the reign of Bridius, who was the son of Meilochon, and the powerful king of the Pictish nation, and he converted that nation to the faith of Christ, by his preaching and example. Wherefore he also received of them the gift of the aforesaid island whereon to found a monastery. It is not a large island, but contains about five families, according to the English computation; his successors hold it to this day; he was also buried therein, having died at the age of seventy-seven, about thirty-two years after he came into Britain to preach. Before he crossed over into Britain, he had built a famous monastery in Ireland, which, from the great number of oaks, is in the Scottish tongue called Dearthach — The Field of Oaks. From both these monasteries, many others had their beginning through his disciples, both in Britain and Ireland; but the island monastery where his body lies, has the pre-eminence among them all.

That island has for its ruler an abbot, who is a priest, to whose jurisdiction all the province, and even the bishops, contrary to the usual method, are bound to be subject, according to the example of their first teacher, who was not a bishop, but a priest and monk; of whose life and discourses some records are said to be preserved by his disciples. But whatsoever he was himself, this we know for certain concerning him, that he left successors renowned for their continence, their love of God, and observance of monastic rules. It is true they employed doubtful cycles in fixing the time of the great festival, as having none to bring them the synodal decrees for the observance of Easter, by reason of their being so far away from the rest of the world; but

they earnestly practised such works of piety and chastity as they could learn from the Prophets, the Gospels and the Apostolic writings. This manner of keeping Easter continued among them no little time, to wit, for the space of 150 years, till the year of our Lord 715.

But then the most reverend and holy father and priest, Egbert, of the English nation, who had long lived in banishment in Ireland for the sake of Christ, and was most learned in the Scriptures, and renowned for long perfection of life, came among them, corrected their error, and led them to observe the true and canonical day of Easter; which, nevertheless, they did not always keep on the fourteenth of the moon with the Jews, as some imagined, but on Sunday, although not in the proper week. For, as Christians, they knew that the Resurrection of our Lord, which happened on the first day of the week, was always to be celebrated on the first day of the week; but being rude and barbarous, they had not learned when that same first day after the Sabbath, which is now called the Lord's day, should come. But because they had not failed in the grace of fervent charity, they were accounted worthy to receive the full knowledge of this matter also, according to the promise of the Apostle, "And if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." Of which we shall speak more fully hereafter in its proper place.

Chap. V.

Of the life of Bishop Aidan. [635 a.d.]

From this island, then, and the fraternity of these monks, Aidan was sent to instruct the English nation in Christ, having received the dignity of a bishop. At that time Segeni, abbot and priest, presided over that monastery. Among other lessons in holy living, Aidan left the clergy a most salutary example of abstinence and continence; it was the highest commendation of his doctrine with all men, that he taught nothing that he did not practise in his life among his brethren; for he neither sought nor loved anything of this world, but delighted in distributing immediately among the poor whom he met whatsoever was given him by the kings or rich men of the world. He was wont to traverse both town and country on foot, never on horseback, unless compelled by some urgent necessity; to the end that, as he went, he might turn aside to any whomsoever he saw, whether rich or poor, and call upon them, if infidels, to receive the mystery of the faith, or, if they were believers, strengthen them in the faith, and stir them up by words and actions to giving of alms and the performance of good works.

His course of life was so different from the slothfulness of our times, that all those who bore him company, whether they were tonsured or laymen, had to study either reading the Scriptures, or learning psalms. This was the daily employment of himself and all that were with him, wheresoever they went; and if it happened, which was but seldom, that he was invited to the king's table, he went with one or two clerks, and having taken a little food, made haste to be gone, either to read with his brethren or to pray. At that time, many religious men and women, led by his example, adopted the custom of prolonging their fast on Wednesdays and Fridays, till the ninth hour, throughout the year, except during the fifty days after Easter. Never, through fear or respect of persons, did he keep silence with regard to the sins of the rich; but was wont to correct them with a severe rebuke. He never gave money to the powerful men of the world, but only food, if he happened to entertain them; and, on the contrary, whatsoever gifts of money he received from the rich, he either distributed, as has been said, for the use of the poor, or bestowed in ransoming such as had been wrongfully sold for slaves. Moreover, he afterwards made many of those he had ransomed his disciples, and after having taught and instructed them, advanced them to priest's orders.

It is said, that when King Oswald had asked a bishop of the Scots to administer the Word of faith to him and his nation, there was first sent to him another man of more harsh disposition, who, after preaching for some time to the English and meeting with no success, not being gladly heard by the people, returned home, and in an assembly of the elders reported, that he had not been able to do any good by his teaching to the nation to whom he had

been sent, because they were intractable men, and of a stubborn and barbarous disposition. They then, it is said, held a council and seriously debated what was to be done, being desirous that the nation should obtain the salvation it demanded, but grieving that they had not received the preacher sent to them. Then said Aidan, who was also present in the council, to the priest in question, “Methinks, brother, that you were more severe to your unlearned hearers than you ought to have been, and did not at first, conformably to the Apostolic rule, give them the milk of more easy doctrine, till, being by degrees nourished with the Word of God, they should be capable of receiving that which is more perfect and of performing the higher precepts of God.” Having heard these words, all present turned their attention to him and began diligently to weigh what he had said, and they decided that he was worthy to be made a bishop, and that he was the man who ought to be sent to instruct the unbelieving and unlearned; since he was found to be endued preeminently with the grace of discretion, which is the mother of the virtues. So they ordained him and sent him forth to preach; and, as time went on, his other virtues became apparent, as well as that temperate discretion which had marked him at first.

Chap. VI.

Of King Oswald's wonderful piety and religion. [635-642 a.d.]

King Oswald, with the English nation which he governed, being instructed by the teaching of this bishop, not only learned to hope for a heavenly kingdom unknown to his fathers, but also obtained of the one God, Who made heaven and earth, a greater earthly kingdom than any of his ancestors. In brief, he brought under his dominion all the nations and provinces of Britain, which are divided into four languages, to wit, those of the Britons, the Picts, the Scots, and the English. Though raised to that height of regal power, wonderful to relate, he was always humble, kind, and generous to the poor and to strangers.

To give one instance, it is told, that when he was once sitting at dinner, on the holy day of Easter, with the aforesaid bishop, and a silver dish full of royal dainties was set before him, and they were just about to put forth their hands to bless the bread, the servant, whom he had appointed to relieve the needy, came in on a sudden, and told the king, that a great multitude of poor folk from all parts was sitting in the streets begging alms of the king; he immediately ordered the meat set before him to be carried to the poor, and the dish to be broken in pieces and divided among them. At which sight, the bishop who sat by him, greatly rejoicing at such an act of piety, clasped his right hand and said, "May this hand never decay." This fell out according to his prayer, for his hands with the arms being cut off from his body, when he was slain in battle, remain uncorrupted to this day, and are kept in a silver shrine, as revered relics, in St. Peter's church in the royal city, which has taken its name from Bebbra, one of its former queens. Through this king's exertions the provinces of the Deiri and the Bernicians, which till then had been at variance, were peacefully united and moulded into one people. He was nephew to King Edwin through his sister Acha; and it was fit that so great a predecessor should have in his own family such an one to succeed him in his religion and sovereignty.

Chap. VII.

How the West Saxons received the Word of God by the preaching of Birinus; and of his successors, Agilbert and Leutherius. [635-670 a.d.]

At that time, the West Saxons, formerly called Gewissae, in the reign of Cynegils, received the faith of Christ, through the preaching of Bishop Birinus, who came into Britain by the counsel of Pope Honorius; having promised in his presence that he would sow the seed of the holy faith in the farthest inland regions of the English, where no other teacher had been before him. Hereupon at the bidding of the Pope he received episcopal consecration from Asterius, bishop of Genoa; but on his arrival in Britain, he first came to the nation of the Gewissae, and finding all in that place confirmed pagans, he thought it better to preach the Word there, than to proceed further to seek for other hearers of his preaching.

Now, as he was spreading the Gospel in the aforesaid province, it happened that when the king himself, having received instruction as a catechumen, was being baptized together with his people, Oswald, the most holy and victorious king of the Northumbrians, being present, received him as he came forth from baptism, and by an honourable alliance most acceptable to God, first adopted as his son, thus born again and dedicated to God, the man whose daughter he was about to receive in marriage. The two kings gave to the bishop the city called Dorcic, there to establish his episcopal see; where having built and consecrated churches, and by his pious labours called many to the Lord, he departed to the Lord, and was buried in the same city; but many years after, when Haedde was bishop, he was translated thence to the city of Venta, and laid in the church of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul.

When the king died, his son Coinwalch succeeded him on the throne, but refused to receive the faith and the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom; and not long after he lost also the dominion of his earthly kingdom; for he put away the sister of Penda, king of the Mercians, whom he had married, and took another wife; whereupon a war ensuing, he was by him deprived of his kingdom, and withdrew to Anna, king of the East Angles, where he lived three years in banishment, and learned and received the true faith; for the king, with whom he lived in his banishment, was a good man, and happy in a good and saintly offspring, as we shall show hereafter.

But when Coinwalch was restored to his kingdom, there came into that province out of Ireland, a certain bishop called Agilbert, a native of Gaul, but who had then lived a long time in Ireland, for the purpose of reading the Scriptures. He attached himself to the king, and voluntarily undertook the ministry of preaching. The king, observing his learning and industry, desired him to accept an episcopal see there and remain as the bishop of his people. Agilbert complied with the request, and presided over that nation as their

bishop for many years. At length the king, who understood only the language of the Saxons, weary of his barbarous tongue, privately brought into the province another bishop, speaking his own language, by name Wini, who had also been ordained in Gaul; and dividing his province into two dioceses, appointed this last his episcopal see in the city of Venta, by the Saxons called Wintancaestir. Agilbert, being highly offended, that the king should do this without consulting him, returned into Gaul, and being made bishop of the city of Paris, died there, being old and full of days. Not many years after his departure out of Britain, Wini was also expelled from his bishopric by the same king, and took refuge with Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, of whom he purchased for money the see of the city of London, and remained bishop thereof till his death. Thus the province of the West Saxons continued no small time without a bishop.

During which time, the aforesaid king of that nation, sustaining repeatedly very great losses in his kingdom from his enemies, at length bethought himself, that as he had been before expelled from the throne for his unbelief, he had been restored when he acknowledged the faith of Christ; and he perceived that his kingdom, being deprived of a bishop, was justly deprived also of the Divine protection. He, therefore, sent messengers into Gaul to Agilbert, with humble apologies entreating him to return to the bishopric of his nation. But he excused himself, and protested that he could not go, because he was bound to the bishopric of his own city and diocese; notwithstanding, in order to give him some help in answer to his earnest request, he sent thither in his stead the priest Leutherius, his nephew, to be ordained as his bishop, if he thought fit, saying that he thought him worthy of a bishopric. The king and the people received him honourably, and asked Theodore, then Archbishop of Canterbury, to consecrate him as their bishop. He was accordingly consecrated in the same city, and many years diligently governed the whole bishopric of the West Saxons by synodical authority.

Chap. VIII.

How Earconbert, King of Kent, ordered the idols to be destroyed; and of his daughter Earcongota, and his kinswoman Ethelberg, virgins consecrated to God. [640 a.d.]

In the year of our Lord 640, Eadbald, king of Kent, departed this life, and left his kingdom to his son Earconbert, who governed it most nobly twenty-four years and some months. He was the first of the English kings that of his supreme authority commanded the idols throughout his whole kingdom to be forsaken and destroyed, and the fast of forty days to be observed; and that the same might not be lightly neglected, he appointed fitting and condign punishments for the offenders. His daughter Earcongota, as became the offspring of such a parent, was a most virtuous virgin, serving God in a monastery in the country of the Franks, built by a most noble abbess, named Fara, at a place called In Brige; for at that time but few monasteries had been built in the country of the Angles, and many were wont, for the sake of monastic life, to repair to the monasteries of the Franks or Gauls; and they also sent their daughters there to be instructed, and united to their Heavenly Bridegroom, especially in the monasteries of Brige, of Cale, and Andilegum. Among whom was also Saethryth, daughter of the wife of Anna, king of the East Angles, above mentioned; and Ethelberg, the king's own daughter; both of whom, though strangers, were for their virtue made abbesses of the monastery of Brige. Sexburg, that king's elder daughter, wife to Earconbert, king of Kent, had a daughter called Earcongota, of whom we are about to speak.

Many wonderful works and miracles of this virgin, dedicated to God, are to this day related by the inhabitants of that place; but for us it shall suffice to say something briefly of her departure out of this world to the heavenly kingdom. The day of her summoning drawing near, she began to visit in the monastery the cells of the infirm handmaidens of Christ, and particularly those that were of a great age, or most noted for their virtuous life, and humbly commending herself to their prayers, she let them know that her death was at hand, as she had learnt by revelation, which she said she had received in this manner. She had seen a band of men, clothed in white, come into the monastery, and being asked by her what they wanted, and what they did there, they answered, "They had been sent thither to carry away with them the gold coin that had been brought thither from Kent." Towards the close of that same night, as morning began to dawn, leaving the darkness of this world, she departed to the light of heaven. Many of the brethren of that monastery who were in other houses, declared they had then plainly heard choirs of singing angels, and, as it were, the sound of a multitude entering the monastery. Whereupon going out immediately to see what it might be, they beheld a great light coming

down from heaven, which bore that holy soul, set loose from the bonds of the flesh, to the eternal joys of the celestial country. They also tell of other miracles that were wrought that night in the same monastery by the power of God; but as we must proceed to other matters, we leave them to be related by those whose concern they are. The body of this venerable virgin and bride of Christ was buried in the church of the blessed protomartyr, Stephen. It was thought fit, three days after, to take up the stone that covered the tomb, and to raise it higher in the same place, and whilst they were doing this, so sweet a fragrance rose from below, that it seemed to all the brethren and sisters there present, as if a store of balsam had been opened.

Her aunt also, Ethelberg, of whom we have spoken, preserved the glory, acceptable to God, of perpetual virginity, in a life of great self-denial, but the extent of her virtue became more conspicuous after her death. Whilst she was abbess, she began to build in her monastery a church, in honour of all the Apostles, wherein she desired that her body should be buried; but when that work was advanced half way, she was prevented by death from finishing it, and was buried in the place in the church which she had chosen. After her death, the brothers occupied themselves with other things, and this structure was left untouched for seven years, at the expiration whereof they resolved, by reason of the greatness of the work, wholly to abandon the building of the church, and to remove the abbess's bones thence to some other church that was finished and consecrated. On opening her tomb, they found the body as untouched by decay as it had been free from the corruption of carnal concupiscence, and having washed it again and clothed it in other garments, they removed it to the church of the blessed Stephen, the Martyr. And her festival is wont to be celebrated there with much honour on the 7th of July.

Chap. IX.

How miracles of healing have been frequently wrought in the place where King Oswald was killed; and how, first, a traveller's horse was restored and afterwards a young girl cured of the palsy. [642 a.d.]

Oswald, the most Christian king of the Northumbrians, reigned nine years, including that year which was held accursed for the barbarous cruelty of the king of the Britons and the reckless apostacy of the English kings; for, as was said above, it is agreed by the unanimous consent of all, that the names and memory of the apostates should be erased from the catalogue of the Christian kings, and no year assigned to their reign. After which period, Oswald was killed in a great battle, by the same pagan nation and pagan king of the Mercians, who had slain his predecessor Edwin, at a place called in the English tongue Maserfelth, in the thirty-eighth year of his age, on the fifth day of the month of August.

How great his faith was towards God, and how remarkable his devotion, has been made evident by miracles even after his death; for, in the place where he was killed by the pagans, fighting for his country, sick men and cattle are frequently healed to this day. Whence it came to pass that many took up the very dust of the place where his body fell, and putting it into water, brought much relief with it to their friends who were sick. This custom came so much into use, that the earth being carried away by degrees, a hole was made as deep as the height of a man. Nor is it surprising that the sick should be healed in the place where he died; for, whilst he lived, he never ceased to provide for the poor and the sick, and to bestow alms on them, and assist them. Many miracles are said to have been wrought in that place, or with the dust carried from it; but we have thought it sufficient to mention two, which we have heard from our elders.

It happened, not long after his death, that a man was travelling on horseback near that place, when his horse on a sudden fell sick, stood still, hung his head, and foamed at the mouth, and, at length, as his pain increased, he fell to the ground; the rider dismounted, and taking off his saddle, waited to see whether the beast would recover or die. At length, after writhing for a long time in extreme anguish, the horse happened in his struggles to come to the very place where the great king died. Immediately the pain abated, the beast ceased from his frantic kicking, and, after the manner of horses, as if resting from his weariness, he rolled from side to side, and then starting up, perfectly recovered, began to graze hungrily on the green herbage. The rider observing this, and being an intelligent man, concluded that there must be some wonderful sanctity in the place where the horse had been healed, and he marked the spot. After which he again mounted his horse, and went on to the inn where he intended to stop. On his arrival he found a girl, niece to the

landlord, who had long been sick of the palsy; and when the members of the household, in his presence, lamented the girl's grievous calamity, he gave them an account of the place where his horse had been cured. In brief, she was put into a wagon and carried to the place and laid down there. At first she slept awhile, and when she awoke, found herself healed of her infirmity. Upon which she called for water, washed her face, arranged her hair, put a kerchief on her head, and returned home on foot, in good health, with those who had brought her.

Chap. X.

How the dust of that place prevailed against fire. [After 642 a.d.]

About the same time, another traveller, a Briton, as is reported, happened to pass by the same place, where the aforesaid battle was fought. Observing one particular spot of ground greener and more beautiful than any other part of the field, he had the wisdom to infer that the cause of the unusual greenness in that place must be that some person of greater holiness than any other in the army had been killed there. He therefore took along with him some of the dust of that piece of ground, tying it up in a linen cloth, supposing, as was indeed the case, that it would be of use for curing sick people, and proceeding on his journey, came in the evening to a certain village, and entered a house where the villagers were feasting at supper. Being received by the owners of the house, he sat down with them at the entertainment, hanging the cloth, with the dust which he had carried in it, on a post in the wall. They sat long at supper and drank deep. Now there was a great fire in the middle of the room, and it happened that the sparks flew up and caught the roof of the house, which being made of wattles and thatch, was suddenly wrapped in flames; the guests ran out in panic and confusion, but they were not able to save the burning house, which was rapidly being destroyed. Wherefore the house was burnt down, and only that post on which the dust hung in the linen cloth remained safe and untouched by the fire. When they beheld this miracle, they were all amazed, and inquiring into it diligently, learned that the dust had been taken from the place where the blood of King Oswald had been shed. These wonderful works being made known and reported abroad, many began daily to resort to that place, and received the blessing of health for themselves and their friends.

Chap. XI.

How a light from Heaven stood all night over his relics, and how those possessed with devils were healed by them. [679-697 a.d.]

Among the rest, I think we ought not to pass over in silence the miracles and signs from Heaven that were shown when King Oswald's bones were found, and translated into the church where they are now preserved. This was done by the zealous care of Osthryth, queen of the Mercians, the daughter of his brother Oswy, who reigned after him, as shall be said hereafter.

There is a famous monastery in the province of Lindsey, called Beardaneu, which that queen and her husband Ethelred greatly loved and venerated, conferring upon it many honours. It was here that she was desirous to lay the revered bones of her uncle. When the wagon in which those bones were carried arrived towards evening at the aforesaid monastery, they that were in it were unwilling to admit them, because, though they knew him to be a holy man, yet, as he was a native of another province, and had obtained the sovereignty over them, they retained their ancient aversion to him even after his death. Thus it came to pass that the relics were left in the open air all that night, with only a large tent spread over the wagon which contained them. But it was revealed by a sign from Heaven with how much reverence they ought to be received by all the faithful; for all that night, a pillar of light, reaching from the wagon up to heaven, was visible in almost every part of the province of Lindsey. Hereupon, in the morning, the brethren of that monastery who had refused it the day before, began themselves earnestly to pray that those holy relics, beloved of God, might be laid among them. Accordingly, the bones, being washed, were put into a shrine which they had made for that purpose, and placed in the church, with due honour; and that there might be a perpetual memorial of the royal character of this holy man, they hung up over the monument his banner of gold and purple. Then they poured out the water in which they had washed the bones, in a corner of the cemetery. From that time, the very earth which received that holy water, had the power of saving grace in casting out devils from the bodies of persons possessed.

Lastly, when the aforesaid queen afterwards abode some time in that monastery, there came to visit her a certain venerable abbess, who is still living, called Ethelhild, the sister of the holy men, Ethelwin and Aldwin, the first of whom was bishop in the province of Lindsey, the other abbot of the monastery of Peartaneu; not far from which was the monastery of Ethelhild. When this lady was come, in a conversation between her and the queen, the discourse, among other things, turning upon Oswald, she said, that she also had that night seen the light over his relics reaching up to heaven. The queen thereupon added, that the very dust of the pavement on which the water that washed the bones had been poured out, had already healed many sick persons.

The abbess thereupon desired that some of that health-bringing dust might be given her, and, receiving it, she tied it up in a cloth, and, putting it into a casket, returned home. Some time after, when she was in her monastery, there came to it a guest, who was wont often in the night to be on a sudden grievously tormented with an unclean spirit; he being hospitably entertained, when he had gone to bed after supper, was suddenly seized by the Devil, and began to cry out, to gnash his teeth, to foam at the mouth, and to writhe and distort his limbs. None being able to hold or bind him, the servant ran, and knocking at the door, told the abbess. She, opening the monastery door, went out herself with one of the nuns to the men's apartment, and calling a priest, desired that he would go with her to the sufferer. Being come thither, and seeing many present, who had not been able, by their efforts, to hold the tormented person and restrain his convulsive movements, the priest used exorcisms, and did all that he could to assuage the madness of the unfortunate man, but, though he took much pains, he could not prevail. When no hope appeared of easing him in his ravings, the abbess bethought herself of the dust, and immediately bade her handmaiden go and fetch her the casket in which it was. As soon as she came with it, as she had been bidden, and was entering the hall of the house, in the inner part whereof the possessed person was writhing in torment, he suddenly became silent, and laid down his head, as if he had been falling asleep, stretching out all his limbs to rest. "Silence fell upon all and intent they gazed," anxiously waiting to see the end of the matter. And after about the space of an hour the man that had been tormented sat up, and fetching a deep sigh, said, "Now I am whole, for I am restored to my senses." They earnestly inquired how that came to pass, and he answered, "As soon as that maiden drew near the hall of this house, with the casket she brought, all the evil spirits that vexed me departed and left me, and were no more to be seen." Then the abbess gave him a little of that dust, and the priest having prayed, he passed that night in great peace; nor was he, from that time forward, alarmed by night, or in any way troubled by his old enemy.

Chap. XII.

How a little boy was cured of a fever at his tomb.

Some time after, there was a certain little boy in the said monastery, who had been long grievously troubled with a fever; he was one day anxiously expecting the hour when his fit was to come on, when one of the brothers, coming in to him, said, "Shall I tell you, my son, how you may be cured of this sickness? Rise, enter the church, and go close to Oswald's tomb; sit down and stay there quiet and do not leave it; do not come away, or stir from the place, till the time is past, when the fever leaves you: then I will go in and fetch you away." The boy did as he was advised, and the disease durst not assail him as he sat by the saint's tomb; but fled in such fear that it did not dare to touch him, either the second or third day, or ever after. The brother that came from thence, and told me this, added, that at the time when he was talking with me, the young man was then still living in the monastery, on whom, when a boy, that miracle of healing had been wrought. Nor need we wonder that the prayers of that king who is now reigning with our Lord, should be very efficacious with Him, since he, whilst yet governing his temporal kingdom, was always wont to pray and labour more for that which is eternal. Nay, it is said, that he often continued in prayer from the hour of morning thanksgiving till it was day; and that by reason of his constant custom of praying or giving thanks to God, he was wont always, wherever he sat, to hold his hands on his knees with the palms turned upwards. It is also commonly affirmed and has passed into a proverb, that he ended his life in prayer; for when he was beset with the weapons of his enemies, and perceived that death was at hand, he prayed for the souls of his army. Whence it is proverbially said, "'Lord have mercy on their souls,' said Oswald, as he fell to the ground."

Now his bones were translated to the monastery which we have mentioned, and buried therein: but the king who slew him commanded his head, and hands, with the arms, to be cut off from the body, and set upon stakes. But his successor in the throne, Oswy, coming thither the next year with his army, took them down, and buried his head in the cemetery of the church of Lindisfarne, and the hands and arms in his royal city.

Chap. XIII.

How a certain person in Ireland was restored, when at the point of death, by his relics.

Nor was the fame of the renowned Oswald confined to Britain, but, spreading rays of healing light even beyond the sea, reached also to Germany and Ireland. For the most reverend prelate, Acca, is wont to relate, that when, in his journey to Rome, he and his bishop Wilfrid stayed some time with Wilbrord, the holy archbishop of the Frisians, he often heard him tell of the wonders which had been wrought in that province at the relics of that most worshipful king. And he used to say that in Ireland, when, being yet only a priest, he led the life of a stranger and pilgrim for love of the eternal country, the fame of that king's sanctity was already spread far and near in that island also. One of the miracles, among the rest, which he related, we have thought fit to insert in this our history.

“At the time,” said he, “of the plague which made such widespread havoc in Britain and Ireland, among others, a certain scholar of the Scottish race was smitten with the disease, a man learned in the study of letters, but in no way careful or studious of his eternal salvation; who, seeing his death near at hand, began to fear and tremble lest, as soon as he was dead, he should be hurried away to the prison-house of Hell for his sins. He called me, for I was near, and trembling and sighing in his weakness, with a lamentable voice made his complaint to me, after this manner: ‘You see that my bodily distress increases, and that I am now reduced to the point of death. Nor do I question but that after the death of my body, I shall be immediately snatched away to the everlasting death of my soul, and cast into the torments of hell, since for a long time, amidst all my reading of divine books, I have suffered myself to be ensnared by sin, instead of keeping the commandments of God. But it is my resolve, if the Divine Mercy shall grant me a new term of life, to correct my sinful habits, and wholly to devote anew my mind and life to obedience to the Divine will. But I know that I have no merits of my own whereby to obtain a prolongation of life, nor can I hope to have it, unless it shall please God to forgive me, wretched and unworthy of pardon as I am, through the help of those who have faithfully served him. We have heard, and the report is widespread, that there was in your nation a king, of wonderful sanctity, called Oswald, the excellency of whose faith and virtue has been made famous even after his death by the working of many miracles. I beseech you, if you have any relics of his in your keeping, that you will bring them to me; if haply the Lord shall be pleased, through his merits, to have mercy on me.’ I answered, ‘I have indeed a part of the stake on which his head was set up by the pagans, when he was killed, and if you believe with steadfast heart, the Divine mercy

may, through the merits of so great a man, both grant you a longer term of life here, and render you worthy to be admitted into eternal life.' He answered immediately that he had entire faith therein. Then I blessed some water, and put into it a splinter of the aforesaid oak, and gave it to the sick man to drink. He presently found ease, and, recovering of his sickness, lived a long time after; and, being entirely converted to God in heart and deed, wherever he went, he spoke of the goodness of his merciful Creator, and the honour of His faithful servant."

Chap. XIV.

How on the death of Paulinus, Ithamar was made bishop of Rochester in his stead; and of the wonderful humility of King Oswin, who was cruelly slain by Oswy. [644-651 a.d.]

Oswald being translated to the heavenly kingdom, his brother Oswy, a young man of about thirty years of age, succeeded him on the throne of his earthly kingdom, and held it twenty-eight years with much trouble, being attacked by the pagan nation of the Mercians, that had slain his brother, as also by his son Alchfrid, and by his nephew Oidilwald, the son of his brother who reigned before him. In his second year, that is, in the year of our Lord 644, the most reverend Father Paulinus, formerly Bishop of York, but at that time Bishop of the city of Rochester, departed to the Lord, on the 10th day of October, having held the office of a bishop nineteen years, two months, and twenty-one days; and was buried in the sacristy of the blessed Apostle Andrew, which King Ethelbert had built from the foundation, in the same city of Rochester. In his place, Archbishop Honorius ordained Ithamar, of the Kentish nation, but not inferior to his predecessors in learning and conduct of life.

Oswy, during the first part of his reign, had a partner in the royal dignity called Oswin, of the race of King Edwin, and son to Osríc of whom we have spoken above, a man of wonderful piety and devotion, who governed the province of the Deiri seven years in very great prosperity, and was himself beloved by all men. But Oswy, who governed all the other northern part of the nation beyond the Humber, that is, the province of the Bernicians, could not live at peace with him; and at last, when the causes of their disagreement increased, he murdered him most cruelly. For when each had raised an army against the other, Oswin perceived that he could not maintain a war against his enemy who had more auxiliaries than himself, and he thought it better at that time to lay aside all thoughts of engaging, and to reserve himself for better times. He therefore disbanded the army which he had assembled, and ordered all his men to return to their own homes, from the place that is called Wilfaraesdun, that is, Wilfar's Hill, which is about ten miles distant from the village called Cataract, towards the north-west. He himself, with only one trusty thegn, whose name was Tondhere, withdrew and lay concealed in the house of Hunwald, a noble, whom he imagined to be his most assured friend. But, alas! it was far otherwise; for Hunwald betrayed him, and Oswy, by the hands of his reeve, Ethilwin, foully slew him and the thegn aforesaid. This happened on the 20th of August, in the ninth year of his reign, at a place called Ingetlingum, where afterwards, to atone for this crime, a monastery was built, wherein prayers should be daily offered up to God for the redemption of the souls of both kings, to wit, of him that was murdered, and of him that commanded the murder.

King Oswin was of a goodly countenance, and tall of stature, pleasant in discourse, and courteous in behaviour; and bountiful to all, gentle and simple alike; so that he was beloved by all men for the royal dignity of his mind and appearance and actions, and men of the highest rank came from almost all provinces to serve him. Among all the graces of virtue and moderation by which he was distinguished and, if I may say so, blessed in a special manner, humility is said to have been the greatest, which it will suffice to prove by one instance.

He had given a beautiful horse to Bishop Aidan, to use either in crossing rivers, or in performing a journey upon any urgent necessity, though the Bishop was wont to travel ordinarily on foot. Some short time after, a poor man meeting the Bishop, and asking alms, he immediately dismounted, and ordered the horse, with all his royal trappings, to be given to the beggar; for he was very compassionate, a great friend to the poor, and, in a manner, the father of the wretched. This being told to the king, when they were going in to dinner, he said to the Bishop, "What did you mean, my lord Bishop, by giving the poor man that royal horse, which it was fitting that you should have for your own use? Had not we many other horses of less value, or things of other sorts, which would have been good enough to give to the poor, instead of giving that horse, which I had chosen and set apart for your own use?" Thereupon the Bishop answered, "What do you say, O king? Is that son of a mare more dear to you than that son of God?" Upon this they went in to dinner, and the Bishop sat in his place; but the king, who had come in from hunting, stood warming himself, with his attendants, at the fire. Then, on a sudden, whilst he was warming himself, calling to mind what the bishop had said to him, he ungirt his sword, and gave it to a servant, and hastened to the Bishop and fell down at his feet, beseeching him to forgive him; "For from this time forward," said he, "I will never speak any more of this, nor will I judge of what or how much of our money you shall give to the sons of God." The bishop was much moved at this sight, and starting up, raised him, saying that he was entirely reconciled to him, if he would but sit down to his meat, and lay aside all sorrow. The king, at the bishop's command and request, was comforted, but the bishop, on the other hand, grew sad and was moved even to tears. His priest then asking him, in the language of his country, which the king and his servants did not understand, why he wept, "I know," said he, "that the king will not live long; for I never before saw a humble king; whence I perceive that he will soon be snatched out of this life, because this nation is not worthy of such a ruler." Not long after, the bishop's gloomy foreboding was fulfilled by the king's sad death, as has been said above. But Bishop Aidan himself was also taken out of this world, not more than twelve days after the death of the king he loved, on the 31st of August, to receive the eternal reward of his labours from the Lord.

Chap. XV.

How Bishop Aidan foretold to certain seamen that a storm would arise, and gave them some holy oil to calm it. [Between 642 and 645 a.d.]

How great the merits of Aidan were, was made manifest by the Judge of the heart, with the testimony of miracles, whereof it will suffice to mention three, that they may not be forgotten. A certain priest, whose name was Utta, a man of great weight and sincerity, and on that account honoured by all men, even the princes of the world, was sent to Kent, to bring thence, as wife for King Oswy, Eanfled, the daughter of King Edwin, who had been carried thither when her father was killed. Intending to go thither by land, but to return with the maiden by sea, he went to Bishop Aidan, and entreated him to offer up his prayers to the Lord for him and his company, who were then to set out on so long a journey. He, blessing them, and commending them to the Lord, at the same time gave them some holy oil, saying, "I know that when you go on board ship, you will meet with a storm and contrary wind; but be mindful to cast this oil I give you into the sea, and the wind will cease immediately; you will have pleasant calm weather to attend you and send you home by the way that you desire."

All these things fell out in order, even as the bishop had foretold. For first, the waves of the sea raged, and the sailors endeavoured to ride it out at anchor, but all to no purpose; for the sea sweeping over the ship on all sides and beginning to fill it with water, they all perceived that death was at hand and about to overtake them. The priest at last, remembering the bishop's words, laid hold of the phial and cast some of the oil into the sea, which at once, as had been foretold, ceased from its uproar. Thus it came to pass that the man of God, by the spirit of prophecy, foretold the storm that was to come to pass, and by virtue of the same spirit, though absent in the body, calmed it when it had arisen. The story of this miracle was not told me by a person of little credit, but by Cynimund, a most faithful priest of our church, who declared that it was related to him by Utta, the priest, in whose case and through whom the same was wrought.

Chap. XVI.

How the same Aidan, by his prayers, saved the royal city when it was fired by the enemy [Before 651 a.d.]

Another notable miracle of the same father is related by many such as were likely to have knowledge thereof; for during the time that he was bishop, the hostile army of the Mercians, under the command of Penda, cruelly ravaged the country of the Northumbrians far and near, even to the royal city, which has its name from Bebba, formerly its queen. Not being able to take it by storm or by siege, he endeavoured to burn it down; and having pulled down all the villages in the neighbourhood of the city, he brought thither an immense quantity of beams, rafters, partitions, wattles and thatch, wherewith he encompassed the place to a great height on the land side, and when he found the wind favourable, he set fire to it and attempted to burn the town.

At that time, the most reverend Bishop Aidan was dwelling in the Isle of Farne, which is about two miles from the city; for thither he was wont often to retire to pray in solitude and silence; and, indeed, this lonely dwelling of his is to this day shown in that island. When he saw the flames of fire and the smoke carried by the wind rising above the city walls, he is said to have lifted up his eyes and hands to heaven, and cried with tears, "Behold, Lord, how great evil is wrought by Penda!" These words were hardly uttered, when the wind immediately veering from the city, drove back the flames upon those who had kindled them, so that some being hurt, and all afraid, they forebore any further attempts against the city, which they perceived to be protected by the hand of God.

Chap. XVII.

How a prop of the church on which Bishop Aidan was leaning when he died, could not be consumed when the rest of the Church was on fire; and concerning his inward life. [651 a.d.]

Aidan was in the king's township, not far from the city of which we have spoken above, at the time when death caused him to quit the body, after he had been bishop sixteen years; for having a church and a chamber in that place, he was wont often to go and stay there, and to make excursions from it to preach in the country round about, which he likewise did at other of the king's townships, having nothing of his own besides his church and a few fields about it. When he was sick they set up a tent for him against the wall at the west end of the church, and so it happened that he breathed his last, leaning against a buttress that was on the outside of the church to strengthen the wall. He died in the seventeenth year of his episcopate, on the 31st of August. His body was thence presently translated to the isle of Lindisfarne, and buried in the cemetery of the brethren. Some time after, when a larger church was built there and dedicated in honour of the blessed prince of the Apostles, his bones were translated thither, and laid on the right side of the altar, with the respect due to so great a prelate.

Finan, who had likewise been sent thither from Hii, the island monastery of the Scots, succeeded him, and continued no small time in the bishopric. It happened some years after, that Penda, king of the Mercians, coming into these parts with a hostile army, destroyed all he could with fire and sword, and the village where the bishop died, along with the church above mentioned, was burnt down; but it fell out in a wonderful manner that the buttress against which he had been leaning when he died, could not be consumed by the fire which devoured all about it. This miracle being noised abroad, the church was soon rebuilt in the same place, and that same buttress was set up on the outside, as it had been before, to strengthen the wall. It happened again, some time after, that the village and likewise the church were carelessly burned down the second time. Then again, the fire could not touch the buttress; and, miraculously, though the fire broke through the very holes of the nails wherewith it was fixed to the building, yet it could do no hurt to the buttress itself. When therefore the church was built there the third time, they did not, as before, place that buttress on the outside as a support of the building, but within the church, as a memorial of the miracle; where the people coming in might kneel, and implore the Divine mercy. And it is well known that since then many have found grace and been healed in that same place, as also that by means of splinters cut off from the buttress, and put into water, many more have obtained a remedy for their own infirmities and those of their friends.

I have written thus much concerning the character and works of the

aforesaid Aidan, in no way commending or approving his lack of wisdom with regard to the observance of Easter; nay, heartily detesting it, as I have most manifestly proved in the book I have written, “*De Temporibus*”; but, like an impartial historian, unreservedly relating what was done by or through him, and commending such things as are praiseworthy in his actions, and preserving the memory thereof for the benefit of the readers; to wit, his love of peace and charity; of continence and humility; his mind superior to anger and avarice, and despising pride and vainglory; his industry in keeping and teaching the Divine commandments, his power of study and keeping vigil; his priestly authority in reproving the haughty and powerful, and at the same time his tenderness in comforting the afflicted, and relieving or defending the poor. To be brief, so far as I have learnt from those that knew him, he took care to neglect none of those things which he found in the Gospels and the writings of Apostles and prophets, but to the utmost of his power endeavoured to fulfil them all in his deeds.

These things I greatly admire and love in the aforesaid bishop, because I do not doubt that they were pleasing to God; but I do not approve or praise his observance of Easter at the wrong time, either through ignorance of the canonical time appointed, or, if he knew it, being prevailed on by the authority of his nation not to adopt it. Yet this I approve in him, that in the celebration of his Easter, the object which he had at heart and revered and preached was the same as ours, to wit, the redemption of mankind, through the Passion, Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven of the Man Christ Jesus, who is the mediator between God and man. And therefore he always celebrated Easter, not as some falsely imagine, on the fourteenth of the moon, like the Jews, on any day of the week, but on the Lord’s day, from the fourteenth to the twentieth of the moon; and this he did from his belief that the Resurrection of our Lord happened on the first day of the week, and for the hope of our resurrection, which also he, with the holy Church, believed would truly happen on that same first day of the week, now called the Lord’s day.

Chap. XVIII.

Of the life and death of the religious King Sigbert. [*Circ. 631 a.d.*]

At this time, the kingdom of the East Angles, after the death of Earpwald, the successor of Redwald, was governed by his brother Sigbert, a good and religious man, who some time before had been baptized in Gaul, whilst he lived in banishment, a fugitive from the enmity of Redwald. When he returned home, as soon as he ascended the throne, being desirous to imitate the good institutions which he had seen in Gaul, he founded a school wherein boys should be taught letters, and was assisted therein by Bishop Felix, who came to him from Kent, and who furnished them with masters and teachers after the manner of the people of Kent.

This king became so great a lover of the heavenly kingdom, that at last, quitting the affairs of his kingdom, and committing them to his kinsman Ecgric, who before had a share in that kingdom, he entered a monastery, which he had built for himself, and having received the tonsure, applied himself rather to do battle for a heavenly throne. A long time after this, it happened that the nation of the Mercians, under King Penda, made war on the East Angles; who finding themselves no match for their enemy, entreated Sigbert to go with them to battle, to encourage the soldiers. He was unwilling and refused, upon which they drew him against his will out of the monastery, and carried him to the army, hoping that the soldiers would be less afraid and less disposed to flee in the presence of one who had formerly been an active and distinguished commander. But he, still mindful of his profession, surrounded, as he was, by a royal army, would carry nothing in his hand but a wand, and was killed with King Ecgric; and the pagans pressing on, all their army was either slaughtered or dispersed.

They were succeeded in the kingdom by Anna, the son of Eni, of the blood royal, a good man, and the father of good children, of whom, in the proper place, we shall speak hereafter. He also was afterwards slain like his predecessors by the same pagan chief of the Mercians.

Chap. XIX.

How Fursa built a monastery among the East Angles, and of his visions and sanctity, to which, his flesh remaining uncorrupted after death bore testimony. [*Circ. 633 a.d.*]

Whilst Sigbert still governed the kingdom, there came out of Ireland a holy man called Fursa, renowned both for his words and actions, and remarkable for singular virtues, being desirous to live as a stranger and pilgrim for the Lord's sake, wherever an opportunity should offer. On coming into the province of the East Angles, he was honourably received by the aforesaid king, and performing his wonted task of preaching the Gospel, by the example of his virtue and the influence of his words, converted many unbelievers to Christ, and confirmed in the faith and love of Christ those that already believed.

Here he fell into some infirmity of body, and was thought worthy to see a vision of angels; in which he was admonished diligently to persevere in the ministry of the Word which he had undertaken, and indefatigably to apply himself to his usual watching and prayers; inasmuch as his end was certain, but the hour thereof uncertain, according to the saying of our Lord, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour." Being confirmed by this vision, he set himself with all speed to build a monastery on the ground which had been given him by King Sigbert, and to establish a rule of life therein. This monastery was pleasantly situated in the woods, near the sea; it was built within the area of a fort, which in the English language is called Cnobheresburg, that is, Cnobhere's Town; afterwards, Anna, king of that province, and certain of the nobles, embellished it with more stately buildings and with gifts.

This man was of noble Scottish blood, but much more noble in mind than in birth. From his boyish years, he had earnestly applied himself to reading sacred books and observing monastic discipline, and, as is most fitting for holy men, he carefully practised all that he learned to be right.

Now, in course of time he himself built a monastery, wherein he might with more freedom devote himself to his heavenly studies. There, falling sick, as the book concerning his life clearly informs us, he fell into a trance, and quitting his body from the evening till cockcrow, he was accounted worthy to behold the sight of the choirs of angels, and to hear their glad songs of praise. He was wont to declare, that among other things he distinctly heard this refrain: "The saints shall go from strength to strength." And again, "The God of gods shall be seen in Sion." Being restored to his body, and again taken from it three days after, he not only saw the greater joys of the blessed, but also fierce conflicts of evil spirits, who by frequent accusations wickedly endeavoured to obstruct his journey to heaven; but the angels protected him,

and all their endeavours were in vain. Concerning all these matters, if any one desires to be more fully informed, to wit, with what subtlety of deceit the devils recounted both his actions and idle words, and even his thoughts, as if they had been written down in a book; and what joyous or grievous tidings he learned from the holy angels and just men who appeared to him among the angels; let him read the little book of his life which I have mentioned, and I doubt not that he will thereby reap much spiritual profit.

But there is one thing among the rest, which we have thought it may be beneficial to many to insert in this history. When he had been taken up on high, he was bidden by the angels that conducted him to look back upon the world. Upon which, casting his eyes downward, he saw, as it were, a dark valley in the depths underneath him. He also saw four fires in the air, not far distant from each other. Then asking the angels, what fires those were, he was told, they were the fires which would kindle and consume the world. One of them was of falsehood, when we do not fulfil that which we promised in Baptism, to renounce the Devil and all his works. The next was of covetousness, when we prefer the riches of the world to the love of heavenly things. The third was of discord, when we do not fear to offend our neighbour even in needless things. The fourth was of ruthlessness when we think it a light thing to rob and to defraud the weak. These fires, increasing by degrees, extended so as to meet one another, and united in one immense flame. When it drew near, fearing for himself, he said to the angel, "Lord, behold the fire draws near to me." The angel answered, "That which you did not kindle will not burn you; for though this appears to be a terrible and great pyre, yet it tries every man according to the merits of his works; for every man's concupiscence shall burn in this fire; for as a man burns in the body through unlawful pleasure, so, when set free from the body, he shall burn by the punishment which he has deserved."

Then he saw one of the three angels, who had been his guides throughout both visions, go before and divide the flaming fires, whilst the other two, flying about on both sides, defended him from the danger of the fire. He also saw devils flying through the fire, raising the flames of war against the just. Then followed accusations of the envious spirits against himself, the defence of the good spirits, and a fuller vision of the heavenly hosts; as also of holy men of his own nation, who, as he had learnt, had worthily held the office of priesthood in old times, and who were known to fame; from whom he heard many things very salutary to himself, and to all others that would listen to them. When they had ended their discourse, and returned to Heaven with the angelic spirits, there remained with the blessed Fursa, the three angels of whom we have spoken before, and who were to bring him back to the body. And when they approached the aforesaid great fire, the angel divided the flame, as he had done before; but when the man of God came to the passage so opened amidst the flames, the unclean spirits, laying hold of one of those whom they were burning in the fire, cast him against him, and, touching his

shoulder and jaw, scorched them. He knew the man, and called to mind that he had received his garment when he died. The holy angel, immediately laying hold of the man, threw him back into the fire, and the malignant enemy said, "Do not reject him whom you before received; for as you received the goods of the sinner, so you ought to share in his punishment." But the angel withstood him, saying, "He did not receive them through avarice, but in order to save his soul." The fire ceased, and the angel, turning to him, said, "That which you kindled burned you; for if you had not received the money of this man that died in his sins, his punishment would not burn you." And he went on to speak with wholesome counsel of what ought to be done for the salvation of such as repented in the hour of death.

Being afterwards restored to the body, throughout the whole course of his life he bore the mark of the fire which he had felt in the spirit, visible to all men on his shoulder and jaw; and the flesh openly showed, in a wonderful manner, what the spirit had suffered in secret. He always took care, as he had done before, to teach all men the practice of virtue, as well by his example, as by preaching. But as for the story of his visions, he would only relate them to those who, from desire of repentance, questioned him about them. An aged brother of our monastery is still living, who is wont to relate that a very truthful and religious man told him, that he had seen Fursa himself in the province of the East Angles, and heard those visions from his lips; adding, that though it was in severe winter weather and a hard frost, and the man was sitting in a thin garment when he told the story, yet he sweated as if it had been in the heat of mid-summer, by reason of the great terror or joy of which he spoke.

To return to what we were saying before, when, after preaching the Word of God many years in Scotland, he could not well endure the disturbance of the crowds that resorted to him, leaving all that he looked upon as his own, he departed from his native island, and came with a few brothers through the Britons into the province of the English, and preaching the Word there, as has been said, built a famous monastery. When this was duly carried out, he became desirous to rid himself of all business of this world, and even of the monastery itself, and forthwith left the care of it and of its souls, to his brother Fullan, and the priests Gobban and Dicull, and being himself free from all worldly affairs, resolved to end his life as a hermit. He had another brother called Ultan, who, after a long monastic probation, had also adopted the life of an anchorite. So, seeking him out alone, he lived a whole year with him in self-denial and prayer, and laboured daily with his hands.

Afterwards seeing the province thrown into confusion by the irruptions of the pagans, and foreseeing that the monasteries would also be in danger, he left all things in order, and sailed over into Gaul, and being there honourably entertained by Clovis, king of the Franks, or by the patrician Ercinwald, he built a monastery in the place called Latineacum, and falling sick not long after, departed this life. The same Ercinwald, the patrician, took his body, and

kept it in the porch of a church he was building in his town of Perrona, till the church itself should be dedicated. This happened twenty-seven days after, and the body being taken from the porch, to be re-buried near the altar, was found as whole as if he had died that very hour. And again, four years after, when a more beautiful shrine had been built to receive his body to the east of the altar, it was still found without taint of corruption, and was translated thither with due honour; where it is well known that his merits, through the divine operation, have been declared by many miracles. We have briefly touched upon these matters as well as the incorruption of his body, that the lofty nature of the man may be better known to our readers. All which, as also concerning the comrades of his warfare, whosoever will read it, will find more fully described in the book of his life.

Chap. XX.

How, when Honorius died, Deusdedit became Archbishop of Canterbury; and of those who were at that time bishops of the East Angles, and of the church of Rochester. [653 a.d.]

In the meantime, Felix, bishop of the East Angles, dying, when he had held that see seventeen years, Honorius ordained Thomas his deacon, of the province of the Gyrwas, in his place; and he being taken from this life when he had been bishop five years, Bertgils, surnamed Boniface, of the province of Kent, was appointed in his stead. Honorius himself also, having run his course, departed this life in the year of our Lord 653, on the 30th of September; and when the see had been vacant a year and six months, Deusdedit of the nation of the West Saxons, was chosen the sixth Archbishop of Canterbury. To ordain him, Ithamar, bishop of Rochester, came thither. His ordination was on the 26th of March, and he ruled the church nine years, four months, and two days; and when Ithamar died, he consecrated in his place Damian, who was of the race of the South Saxons.

Chap. XXI.

How the province of the Midland Angles became Christian under King Peda. [653 a.d.]

At this time, the Middle Angles, that is, the Angles of the Midland country, under their Prince Peda, the son of King Penda, received the faith and mysteries of the truth. Being an excellent youth, and most worthy of the name and office of a king, he was by his father elevated to the throne of that nation, and came to Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, requesting to have his daughter Alchfled given him to wife; but he could not obtain his desire unless he would receive the faith of Christ, and be baptized, with the nation which he governed. When he heard the preaching of the truth, the promise of the heavenly kingdom, and the hope of resurrection and future immortality, he declared that he would willingly become a Christian, even though he should not obtain the maiden; being chiefly prevailed on to receive the faith by King Oswy's son Alchfrid, who was his brother-in-law and friend, for he had married his sister Cyneburg, the daughter of King Penda.

Accordingly he was baptized by Bishop Finan, with all his nobles and thegns, and their servants, that came along with him, at a noted township, belonging to the king, called At the Wall. And having received four priests, who by reason of their learning and good life were deemed proper to instruct and baptize his nation, he returned home with much joy. These priests were Cedd and Adda, and Betti and Diuma; the last of whom was by nation a Scot, the others English. Adda was brother to Utta, whom we have mentioned before, a renowned priest, and abbot of the monastery which is called At the Goat's Head. The aforesaid priests, arriving in the province with the prince, preached the Word, and were heard willingly; and many, as well of the nobility as the common sort, renouncing the abominations of idolatry, were daily washed in the fountain of the faith.

Nor did King Penda forbid the preaching of the Word even among his people, the Mercians, if any were willing to hear it; but, on the contrary, he hated and despised those whom he perceived to be without the works of faith, when they had once received the faith of Christ, saying, that they were contemptible and wretched who scorned to obey their God, in whom they believed. These things were set on foot two years before the death of King Penda.

But when he was slain, and the most Christian king, Oswy, succeeded him in the throne, as we shall hereafter relate, Diuma, one of the aforesaid four priests, was made bishop of the Midland Angles, as also of the Mercians, being ordained by Bishop Finan; for the scarcity of priests made it necessary that one prelate should be set over two nations. Having in a short time gained many people to the Lord, he died among the Midland Angles, in the country

called Infeppingum; and Ceollach, also of the Scottish nation, succeeded him in the bishopric. But he, not long after, left his bishopric, and returned to the island of Hii, which, among the Scots, was the chief and head of many monasteries. His successor in the bishopric was Trumhere, a godly man, and trained in the monastic life, an Englishman, but ordained bishop by the Scots. This happened in the days of King Wulfhere, of whom we shall speak hereafter.

Chap. XXII.

How under King Sigbert, through the preaching of Cedd, the East Saxons again received the faith, which they had before cast off. [653 a.d.]

At that time, also, the East Saxons, at the instance of King Oswy, again received the faith, which they had formerly cast off when they expelled Mellitus, their bishop. For Sigbert, who reigned next to Sigbert surnamed The Little, was then king of that nation, and a friend to King Oswy, who, when Sigbert came to the province of the Northumbrians to visit him, as he often did, used to endeavour to convince him that those could not be gods that had been made by the hands of men; that a stock or a stone could not be proper matter to form a god, the residue whereof was either burned in the fire, or framed into any vessels for the use of men, or else was cast out as refuse, trampled on and turned into dust. That God is rather to be understood as incomprehensible in majesty and invisible to human eyes, almighty, eternal, the Creator of heaven and earth and of mankind; Who governs and will judge the world in righteousness, Whose eternal abode must be believed to be in Heaven, and not in base and perishable metal; and that it ought in reason to be concluded, that all those who learn and do the will of Him by Whom they were created, will receive from Him eternal rewards. King Oswy having often, with friendly counsel, like a brother, said this and much more to the like effect to King Sigbert, at length, aided by the consent of his friends, he believed, and after he had consulted with those about him, and exhorted them, when they all agreed and assented to the faith, he was baptized with them by Bishop Finan, in the king's township above spoken of, which is called At the Wall, because it is close by the wall which the Romans formerly drew across the island of Britain, at the distance of twelve miles from the eastern sea.

King Sigbert, having now become a citizen of the eternal kingdom, returned to the seat of his temporal kingdom, requesting of King Oswy that he would give him some teachers, to convert his nation to the faith of Christ, and cleanse them in the fountain of salvation. Wherefore Oswy, sending into the province of the Midland Angles, summoned the man of God, Cedd, and, giving him another priest for his companion, sent them to preach the Word to the East Saxons. When these two, travelling to all parts of that country, had gathered a numerous Church to the Lord, it happened once that Cedd returned home, and came to the church of Lindisfarne to confer with Bishop Finan; who, finding that the work of the Gospel had prospered in his hands, made him bishop of the nation of the East Saxons, calling to him two other bishops to assist at the ordination. Cedd, having received the episcopal dignity, returned to his province, and pursuing the work he had begun with more ample authority, built churches in divers places, and ordained priests and deacons to assist him in the Word of faith, and the ministry of Baptism,

especially in the city which, in the language of the Saxons, is called Ythancaestir, as also in that which is named Tilaburg. The first of these places is on the bank of the Pant, the other on the bank of the Thames. In these, gathering a flock of Christ's servants, he taught them to observe the discipline of a rule of life, as far as those rude people were then capable of receiving it.

Whilst the teaching of the everlasting life was thus, for no small time, making daily increase in that province to the joy of the king and of all the people, it happened that the king, at the instigation of the enemy of all good men, was murdered by his own kindred. They were two brothers who did this wicked deed; and being asked what had moved them to it, they had nothing else to answer, but that they had been incensed against the king, and hated him, because he was too apt to spare his enemies, and calmly forgave the wrongs they had done him, upon their entreaty. Such was the crime for which the king was killed, because he observed the precepts of the Gospel with a devout heart; but in this innocent death his real offence was also punished, according to the prediction of the man of God. For one of those nobles that murdered him was unlawfully married, and when the bishop was not able to prevent or correct the sin, he excommunicated him, and commanded all that would give ear to him not to enter this man's house, nor to eat of his meat. But the king made light of this command, and being invited by the noble, went to a banquet at his house. As he was going thence, the bishop met him. The king, beholding him, immediately dismounted from his horse, trembling, and fell down at his feet, begging pardon for his offence; for the bishop, who was likewise on horseback, had also alighted. Being much incensed, he touched the prostrate king with the rod he held in his hand, and spoke thus with the authority of his office: "I tell thee, forasmuch as thou wouldest not refrain from the house of that sinful and condemned man, thou shalt die in that very house." Yet it is to be believed, that such a death of a religious man not only blotted out his offence, but even added to his merit; because it happened on account of his piety and his observance of the commands of Christ.

Sigbert was succeeded in the kingdom by Suidhelm, the son of Sexbald, who was baptized by the same Cedd, in the province of the East Angles, in the royal township, called Rendlaesham, that is, Rendil's Dwelling; and Ethelwald, king of the East Angles, brother to Anna, king of the same people, received him as he came forth from the holy font.

Chap. XXIII.

How Bishop Cedd, having a place for building a monastery given him by King Ethelwald, consecrated it to the Lord with prayer and fasting; and concerning his death. [659-664 a.d.]

The same man of God, whilst he was bishop among the East Saxons, was also wont oftentimes to visit his own province, Northumbria, for the purpose of exhortation. Oidilwald, the son of King Oswald, who reigned among the Deiri, finding him a holy, wise, and good man, desired him to accept some land whereon to build a monastery, to which the king himself might frequently resort, to pray to the Lord and hear the Word, and where he might be buried when he died; for he believed faithfully that he should receive much benefit from the daily prayers of those who were to serve the Lord in that place. The king had before with him a brother of the same bishop, called Caelin, a man no less devoted to God, who, being a priest, was wont to administer to him and his house the Word and the Sacraments of the faith; by whose means he chiefly came to know and love the bishop. So then, complying with the king's desires, the Bishop chose himself a place whereon to build a monastery among steep and distant mountains, which looked more like lurking-places for robbers and dens of wild beasts, than dwellings of men; to the end that, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, "In the habitation of dragons, where each lay, might be grass with reeds and rushes;" that is, that the fruits of good works should spring up, where before beasts were wont to dwell, or men to live after the manner of beasts.

But the man of God, desiring first to cleanse the place which he had received for the monastery from stain of former crimes, by prayer and fasting, and so to lay the foundations there, requested of the king that he would give him opportunity and leave to abide there for prayer all the time of Lent, which was at hand. All which days, except Sundays, he prolonged his fast till the evening, according to custom, and then took no other sustenance than a small piece of bread, one hen's egg, and a little milk and water. This, he said, was the custom of those of whom he had learned the rule of regular discipline, first to consecrate to the Lord, by prayer and fasting, the places which they had newly received for building a monastery or a church. When there were ten days of Lent still remaining, there came a messenger to call him to the king; and he, that the holy work might not be intermitted, on account of the king's affairs, entreated his priest, Cynibill, who was also his own brother, to complete his pious undertaking. Cynibill readily consented, and when the duty of fasting and prayer was over, he there built the monastery, which is now called Laestingaeu, and established therein religious customs according to the use of Lindisfarne, where he had been trained.

When Cedd had for many years held the office of bishop in the aforesaid

province, and also taken charge of this monastery, over which he placed provosts, it happened that he came thither at a time when there was plague, and fell sick and died. He was first buried without the walls; but in the process of time a church was built of stone in the monastery, in honour of the Blessed Mother of God, and his body was laid in it, on the right side of the altar.

The bishop left the monastery to be governed after him by his brother Ceadda, who was afterwards made bishop, as shall be told hereafter. For, as it rarely happens, the four brothers we have mentioned, Cedd and Cynibill, and Caelin and Ceadda, were all celebrated priests of the Lord, and two of them also came to be bishops. When the brethren who were in his monastery, in the province of the East Saxons, heard that the bishop was dead and buried in the province of the Northumbrians, about thirty men of that monastery came thither, being desirous either to live near the body of their father, if it should please God, or to die and be buried there. Being gladly received by their brethren and fellow soldiers in Christ, all of them died there struck down by the aforesaid pestilence, except one little boy, who is known to have been saved from death by the prayers of his spiritual father. For being alive long after, and giving himself to the reading of Scripture, he was told that he had not been regenerated by the water of Baptism, and being then cleansed in the laver of salvation, he was afterwards promoted to the order of priesthood, and was of service to many in the church. I do not doubt that he was delivered at the point of death, as I have said, by the intercession of his father, to whose body he had come for love of him, that so he might himself avoid eternal death, and by teaching, offer the ministry of life and salvation to others of the brethren.

Chap. XXIV.

How when King Penda was slain, the province of the Mercians received the faith of Christ, and Oswy gave possessions and territories to God, for building monasteries, as a thank offering for the victory obtained. [655 a.d.]

At this time, King Oswy was exposed to the cruel and intolerable invasions of Penda, king of the Mercians, whom we have so often mentioned, and who had slain his brother; at length, compelled by his necessity, he promised to give him countless gifts and royal marks of honour greater than can be believed, to purchase peace; provided that he would return home, and cease to waste and utterly destroy the provinces of his kingdom. The pagan king refused to grant his request, for he had resolved to blot out and extirpate all his nation, from the highest to the lowest; whereupon King Oswy had recourse to the protection of the Divine pity for deliverance from his barbarous and pitiless foe, and binding himself by a vow, said, "If the pagan will not accept our gifts, let us offer them to Him that will, the Lord our God." He then vowed, that if he should win the victory, he would dedicate his daughter to the Lord in holy virginity, and give twelve pieces of land whereon to build monasteries. After this he gave battle with a very small army: indeed, it is reported that the pagans had thirty times the number of men; for they had thirty legions, drawn up under most noted commanders. King Oswy and his son Alchfrid met them with a very small army, as has been said, but trusting in Christ as their Leader; his other son, Egfrid, was then kept as a hostage at the court of Queen Cynwise, in the province of the Mercians. King Oswald's son Oidilwald, who ought to have supported them, was on the enemy's side, and led them on to fight against his country and his uncle; though, during the battle, he withdrew, and awaited the event in a place of safety. The engagement began, the pagans were put to flight or killed, the thirty royal commanders, who had come to Penda's assistance, were almost all of them slain; among whom was Ethelhere, brother and successor to Anna, king of the East Angles. He had been the occasion of the war, and was now killed, having lost his army and auxiliaries. The battle was fought near the river Winwaed, which then, owing to the great rains, was in flood, and had overflowed its banks, so that many more were drowned in the flight than destroyed in battle by the sword.

Then King Oswy, according to the vow he had made to the Lord, returned thanks to God for the victory granted him, and gave his daughter Elfred, who was scarce a year old, to be consecrated to Him in perpetual virginity; bestowing also twelve small estates of land, wherein the practice of earthly warfare should cease, and place and means should be afforded to devout and zealous monks to wage spiritual warfare, and pray for the eternal peace of his nation. Of these estates six were in the province of the Deiri, and the other six in that of the Bernicians. Each of the estates contained ten families, that is, a

hundred and twenty in all. The aforesaid daughter of King Oswy, who was to be dedicated to God, entered the monastery called Heruteu, or, "The Island of the Hart," at that time ruled by the Abbess Hilda, who, two years after, having acquired an estate of ten families, at the place called Streanaeshalch, built a monastery there, in which the aforesaid king's daughter was first trained in the monastic life and afterwards became abbess; till, at the age of fifty-nine, the blessed virgin departed to be united to her Heavenly Bridegroom. In this monastery, she and her father, Oswy, her mother, Eanfled, her mother's father, Edwin, and many other noble persons, are buried in the church of the holy Apostle Peter. King Oswy concluded this war in the district of Loidis, in the thirteenth year of his reign, on the 15th of November, to the great benefit of both nations; for he delivered his own people from the hostile depredations of the pagans, and, having made an end of their heathen chief, converted the Mercians and the adjacent provinces to the grace of the Christian faith.

Diuma was made the first bishop of the Mercians, as also of Lindsey and the Midland Angles, as has been said above, and he died and was buried among the Midland Angles. The second was Ceollach, who, giving up his episcopal office before his death, returned into Scotland. Both these bishops belonged to the nation of the Scots. The third was Trumhere, an Englishman, but educated and ordained by the Scots. He was abbot of the monastery that is called Ingetlingum, and is the place where King Oswin was killed, as has been said above; for Queen Eanfled, his kinswoman, in expiation of his unjust death, begged of King Oswy that he would give Trumhere, the aforesaid servant of God, a place there to build a monastery, because he also was kinsman to the slaughtered king; in which monastery continual prayers should be offered up for the eternal welfare of the kings, both of him that was murdered, and of him that commanded the murder. The same King Oswy governed the Mercians, as also the people of the other southern provinces, three years after he had slain King Penda; and he likewise subdued the greater part of the Picts to the dominion of the English.

At this time he gave to the above-mentioned Peada, son to King Penda, because he was his kinsman, the kingdom of the Southern Mercians, consisting, as is said, of 5,000 families, divided by the river Trent from the Northern Mercians, whose land contains 7,000 families; but Peada was foully slain in the following spring, by the treachery, as is said, of his wife, during the very time of the Easter festival. Three years after the death of King Penda, the Mercian chiefs, Immin, and Eafa, and Eadbert, rebelled against King Oswy, setting up for their king, Wulfhere, son to the said Penda, a youth whom they had kept concealed; and expelling the ealdormen of the foreign king, they bravely recovered at once their liberty and their lands; and being thus free, together with their king, they rejoiced to serve Christ the true King, for the sake of an everlasting kingdom in heaven. This king governed the Mercians seventeen years, and had for his first bishop Trumhere, above spoken of; the second was Jaruman; the third Ceadda; the fourth Wynfrid. All

these, succeeding each other in order under King Wulfhere, discharged episcopal duties to the Mercian nation.

Chap. XXV.

How the question arose about the due time of keeping Easter, with those that came out of Scotland.[664 a.d.]

In the meantime, Bishop Aidan being taken away from this life, Finan, who was ordained and sent by the Scots, succeeded him in the bishopric, and built a church in the Isle of Lindisfarne, fit for the episcopal see; nevertheless, after the manner of the Scots, he made it, not of stone, but entirely of hewn oak, and covered it with reeds; and it was afterwards dedicated in honour of the blessed Peter the Apostle, by the most reverend Archbishop Theodore. Eadbert, also bishop of that place, took off the thatch, and caused it to be covered entirely, both roof and walls, with plates of lead.

At this time, a great and frequently debated question arose about the observance of Easter; those that came from Kent or Gaul affirming, that the Scots celebrated Easter Sunday contrary to the custom of the universal Church. Among them was a most zealous defender of the true Easter, whose name was Ronan, a Scot by nation, but instructed in the rule of ecclesiastical truth in Gaul or Italy. Disputing with Finan, he convinced many, or at least induced them to make a more strict inquiry after the truth; yet he could not prevail upon Finan, but, on the contrary, embittered him the more by reproof, and made him a professed opponent of the truth, for he was of a violent temper. James, formerly the deacon of the venerable Archbishop Paulinus, as has been said above, observed the true and Catholic Easter, with all those that he could instruct in the better way. Queen Eanfled and her followers also observed it as she had seen it practised in Kent, having with her a Kentish priest who followed the Catholic observance, whose name was Romanus. Thus it is said to have sometimes happened in those times that Easter was twice celebrated in one year; and that when the king, having ended his fast, was keeping Easter, the queen and her followers were still fasting, and celebrating Palm Sunday. Whilst Aidan lived, this difference about the observance of Easter was patiently tolerated by all men, for they well knew, that though he could not keep Easter contrary to the custom of those who had sent him, yet he industriously laboured to practise the works of faith, piety, and love, according to the custom of all holy men; for which reason he was deservedly beloved by all, even by those who differed in opinion concerning Easter, and was held in veneration, not only by less important persons, but even by the bishops, Honorius of Canterbury, and Felix of the East Angles.

But after the death of Finan, who succeeded him, when Colman, who was also sent from Scotland, came to be bishop, a greater controversy arose about the observance of Easter, and other rules of ecclesiastical life. Whereupon this question began naturally to influence the thoughts and hearts of many who

feared, lest haply, having received the name of Christians, they might run, or have run, in vain. This reached the ears of the rulers, King Oswy and his son Alchfrid. Now Oswy, having been instructed and baptized by the Scots, and being very perfectly skilled in their language, thought nothing better than what they taught; but Alchfrid, having for his teacher in Christianity the learned Wilfrid, who had formerly gone to Rome to study ecclesiastical doctrine, and spent much time at Lyons with Dalfinus, archbishop of Gaul, from whom also he had received the crown of ecclesiastical tonsure, rightly thought that this man's doctrine ought to be preferred before all the traditions of the Scots. For this reason he had also given him a monastery of forty families, at a place called Inhrypum; which place, not long before, he had given for a monastery to those that were followers of the Scots; but forasmuch as they afterwards, being left to their choice, preferred to quit the place rather than alter their custom, he gave it to him, whose life and doctrine were worthy of it.

Agilbert, bishop of the West Saxons, above-mentioned, a friend of King Alchfrid and of Abbot Wilfrid, had at that time come into the province of the Northumbrians, and was staying some time among them; at the request of Alchfrid, he made Wilfrid a priest in his aforesaid monastery. He had in his company a priest, whose name was Agatho. The question being raised there concerning Easter and the tonsure and other ecclesiastical matters, it was arranged, that a synod should be held in the monastery of Streanaeshalch, which signifies the Bay of the Lighthouse, where the Abbess Hilda, a woman devoted to the service of God, then ruled; and that there this question should be decided. The kings, both father and son, came thither, and the bishops, Colman with his Scottish clerks, and Agilbert with the priests Agatho and Wilfrid. James and Romanus were on their side; but the Abbess Hilda and her followers were for the Scots, as was also the venerable Bishop Cedd, long before ordained by the Scots, as has been said above, and he acted in that council as a most careful interpreter for both parties.

King Oswy first made an opening speech, in which he said that it behoved those who served one God to observe one rule of life; and as they all expected the same kingdom in heaven, so they ought not to differ in the celebration of the heavenly mysteries; but rather to inquire which was the truer tradition, that it might be followed by all in common; he then commanded his bishop, Colman, first to declare what the custom was which he observed, and whence it derived its origin. Then Colman said, "The Easter which I keep, I received from my elders, who sent me hither as bishop; all our forefathers, men beloved of God, are known to have celebrated it after the same manner; and that it may not seem to any contemptible and worthy to be rejected, it is the same which the blessed John the Evangelist, the disciple specially beloved of our Lord, with all the churches over which he presided, is recorded to have celebrated." When he had said thus much, and more to the like effect, the king commanded Agilbert to make known the manner of his observance and to

show whence it was derived, and on what authority he followed it. Agilbert answered, "I beseech you, let my disciple, the priest Wilfrid, speak in my stead; because we both concur with the other followers of the ecclesiastical tradition that are here present, and he can better and more clearly explain our opinion in the English language, than I can by an interpreter."

Then Wilfrid, being ordered by the king to speak, began thus:—"The Easter which we keep, we saw celebrated by all at Rome, where the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, lived, taught, suffered, and were buried; we saw the same done by all in Italy and in Gaul, when we travelled through those countries for the purpose of study and prayer. We found it observed in Africa, Asia, Egypt, Greece, and all the world, wherever the Church of Christ is spread abroad, among divers nations and tongues, at one and the same time; save only among these and their accomplices in obstinacy, I mean the Picts and the Britons, who foolishly, in these two remote islands of the ocean, and only in part even of them, strive to oppose all the rest of the world." When he had so said, Colman answered, "It is strange that you choose to call our efforts foolish, wherein we follow the example of so great an Apostle, who was thought worthy to lean on our Lord's bosom, when all the world knows him to have lived most wisely." Wilfrid replied, "Far be it from us to charge John with folly, for he literally observed the precepts of the Mosaic Law, whilst the Church was still Jewish in many points, and the Apostles, lest they should give cause of offence to the Jews who were among the Gentiles, were not able at once to cast off all the observances of the Law which had been instituted by God, in the same way as it is necessary that all who come to the faith should forsake the idols which were invented by devils. For this reason it was, that Paul circumcised Timothy, that he offered sacrifice in the temple, that he shaved his head with Aquila and Priscilla at Corinth; for no other advantage than to avoid giving offence to the Jews. Hence it was, that James said to the same Paul, 'Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the Law.' And yet, at this time, when the light of the Gospel is spreading throughout the world, it is needless, nay, it is not lawful, for the faithful either to be circumcised, or to offer up to God sacrifices of flesh. So John, according to the custom of the Law, began the celebration of the feast of Easter, on the fourteenth day of the first month, in the evening, not regarding whether the same happened on a Saturday, or any other week-day. But when Peter preached at Rome, being mindful that our Lord arose from the dead, and gave to the world the hope of resurrection, on the first day of the week, he perceived that Easter ought to be kept after this manner: he always awaited the rising of the moon on the fourteenth day of the first month in the evening, according to the custom and precepts of the Law, even as John did. And when that came, if the Lord's day, then called the first day of the week, was the next day, he began that very evening to celebrate Easter, as we all do at the present time. But if the Lord's day did not fall the next morning after the fourteenth moon, but on the sixteenth, or the

seventeenth, or any other moon till the twenty-first, he waited for that, and on the Saturday before, in the evening, began to observe the holy solemnity of Easter. Thus it came to pass, that Easter Sunday was only kept from the fifteenth moon to the twenty-first. Nor does this evangelical and apostolic tradition abolish the Law, but rather fulfil it; the command being to keep the passover from the fourteenth moon of the first month in the evening to the twenty-first moon of the same month in the evening; which observance all the successors of the blessed John in Asia, since his death, and all the Church throughout the world, have since followed; and that this is the true Easter, and the only one to be celebrated by the faithful, was not newly decreed by the council of Nicaea, but only confirmed afresh; as the history of the Church informs us.

“Thus it is plain, that you, Colman, neither follow the example of John, as you imagine, nor that of Peter, whose tradition you oppose with full knowledge, and that you neither agree with the Law nor the Gospel in the keeping of your Easter. For John, keeping the Paschal time according to the decree of the Mosaic Law, had no regard to the first day of the week, which you do not practise, seeing that you celebrate Easter only on the first day after the Sabbath. Peter celebrated Easter Sunday between the fifteenth and the twenty-first moon, which you do not practise, seeing that you observe Easter Sunday from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon; so that you often begin Easter on the thirteenth moon in the evening, whereof neither the Law made any mention, nor did our Lord, the Author and Giver of the Gospel, on that day either eat the old passover in the evening, or deliver the Sacraments of the New Testament, to be celebrated by the Church, in memory of His Passion, but on the fourteenth. Besides, in your celebration of Easter, you utterly exclude the twenty-first moon, which the Law ordered to be specially observed. Thus, as I have said before, you agree neither with John nor Peter, nor with the Law, nor the Gospel, in the celebration of the greatest festival.”

To this Colman rejoined: “Did the holy Anatolius, much commended in the history of the Church, judge contrary to the Law and the Gospel, when he wrote, that Easter was to be celebrated from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon? Is it to be believed that our most reverend Father Columba and his successors, men beloved by God, who kept Easter after the same manner, judged or acted contrary to the Divine writings? Whereas there were many among them, whose sanctity was attested by heavenly signs and miracles which they wrought; whom I, for my part, doubt not to be saints, and whose life, customs, and discipline I never cease to follow.”

“It is evident,” said Wilfrid, “that Anatolius was a most holy, learned, and commendable man; but what have you to do with him, since you do not observe his decrees? For he undoubtedly, following the rule of truth in his Easter, appointed a cycle of nineteen years, which either you are ignorant of, or if you know it, though it is kept by the whole Church of Christ, yet you despise it as a thing of naught. He so computed the fourteenth moon in our

Lord's Paschal Feast, that according to the custom of the Egyptians, he acknowledged it to be the fifteenth moon on that same day in the evening; so in like manner he assigned the twentieth to Easter-Sunday, as believing that to be the twenty-first moon, when the sun had set. That you are ignorant of the rule of this distinction is proved by this, that you sometimes manifestly keep Easter before the full moon, that is, on the thirteenth day. Concerning your Father Columba and his followers, whose sanctity you say you imitate, and whose rule and precepts confirmed by signs from Heaven you say that you follow, I might answer, then when many, in the day of judgement, shall say to our Lord, that in His name they have prophesied, and have cast out devils, and done many wonderful works, our Lord will reply, that He never knew them. But far be it from me to speak thus of your fathers, for it is much more just to believe good than evil of those whom we know not. Wherefore I do not deny those also to have been God's servants, and beloved of God, who with rude simplicity, but pious intentions, have themselves loved Him. Nor do I think that such observance of Easter did them much harm, as long as none came to show them a more perfect rule to follow; for assuredly I believe that, if any teacher, reckoning after the Catholic manner, had come among them, they would have as readily followed his admonitions, as they are known to have kept those commandments of God, which they had learned and knew.

"But as for you and your companions, you certainly sin, if, having heard the decrees of the Apostolic see, nay, of the universal Church, confirmed, as they are, by Holy Scripture, you scorn to follow them; for, though your fathers were holy, do you think that those few men, in a corner of the remotest island, are to be preferred before the universal Church of Christ throughout the world? And if that Columba of yours, (and, I may say, ours also, if he was Christ's servant,) was a holy man and powerful in miracles, yet could he be preferred before the most blessed chief of the Apostles, to whom our Lord said, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven?' "

When Wilfrid had ended thus, the king said, "Is it true, Colman, that these words were spoken to Peter by our Lord?" He answered, "It is true, O king!" Then said he, "Can you show any such power given to your Columba?" Colman answered, "None." Then again the king asked, "Do you both agree in this, without any controversy, that these words were said above all to Peter, and that the keys of the kingdom of Heaven were given to him by our Lord?" They both answered, "Yes." Then the king concluded, "And I also say unto you, that he is the door-keeper, and I will not gainsay him, but I desire, as far as I know and am able, in all things to obey his laws, lest haply when I come to the gates of the kingdom of Heaven, there should be none to open them, he being my adversary who is proved to have the keys." The king having said this, all who were seated there or standing by, both great and small, gave their assent, and renouncing the less perfect custom, hastened to conform to that

which they had found to be better.

Chap. XXVI.

How Colman, being worsted, returned home; and Tuda succeeded him in the bishopric; and of the state of the church under those teachers. [664 a.d.]

The disputation being ended, and the assembly broken up, Agilbert returned home. Colman, perceiving that his doctrine was rejected, and his party despised, took with him those who wished to follow him, to wit, such as would not accept the Catholic Easter and the tonsure in the form of a crown, (for there was no small dispute about that also,) and went back into Scotland, to consult with his people what was to be done in this case. Cedd, forsaking the practices of the Scots, returned to his bishopric, having submitted to the Catholic observance of Easter. This debate took place in the year of our Lord 664, which was the twenty-second year of the reign of King Oswy, and the thirtieth of the episcopate of the Scots among the English; for Aidan was bishop seventeen years, Finan ten, and Colman three.

When Colman had gone back into his own country, Tuda, the servant of Christ, was made bishop of the Northumbrians in his place, having been instructed and ordained bishop among the Southern Scots, having also the crown of the ecclesiastical tonsure, according to the custom of that province, and observing the Catholic rule with regard to the time of Easter. He was a good and religious man, but he governed the church a very short time; he had come from Scotland whilst Colman was yet bishop, and, both by word and deed, diligently taught all men those things that appertain to the faith and truth. But Eata, who was abbot of the monastery called Mailros, a man most reverend and gentle, was appointed abbot over the brethren that chose to remain in the church of Lindisfarne, when the Scots went away. It is said that Colman, upon his departure, requested and obtained this of King Oswy, because Eata was one of Aidan's twelve boys of the English nation, whom he received in the early years of his episcopate, to be instructed in Christ; for the king greatly loved Bishop Colman on account of his innate discretion. This is that Eata, who, not long after, was made bishop of the same church of Lindisfarne. Colman carried home with him part of the bones of the most reverend Father Aidan, and left part of them in the church where he had presided, ordering them to be interred in the sacristy.

The place which they governed shows how frugal and temperate he and his predecessors were, for there were very few houses besides the church found at their departure; indeed, no more than were barely sufficient to make civilized life possible; they had also no money, but only cattle; for if they received any money from rich persons, they immediately gave it to the poor; there being no need to gather money, or provide houses for the entertainment of the great men of the world; for such never resorted to the church, except to pray and hear the Word of God. The king himself, when occasion required, came only

with five or six servants, and having performed his devotions in the church, departed. But if they happened to take a repast there, they were satisfied with the plain, daily food of the brethren, and required no more. For the whole care of those teachers was to serve God, not the world — to feed the soul, and not the belly.

For this reason the religious habit was at that time held in great veneration; so that wheresoever any clerk or monk went, he was joyfully received by all men, as God's servant; and even if they chanced to meet him upon the way, they ran to him, and with bowed head, were glad to be signed with the cross by his hand, or blessed by his lips. Great attention was also paid to their exhortations; and on Sundays they flocked eagerly to the church, or the monasteries, not to feed their bodies, but to hear the Word of God; and if any priest happened to come into a village, the inhabitants came together and asked of him the Word of life; for the priests and clerks went to the villages for no other reason than to preach, baptize, visit the sick, and, in a word, to take care of souls; and they were so purified from all taint of avarice, that none of them received lands and possessions for building monasteries, unless they were compelled to do so by the temporal authorities; which custom was for some time after universally observed in the churches of the Northumbrians. But enough has now been said on this subject.

Chap. XXVII.

How Egbert, a holy man of the English nation, led a monastic life in Ireland. [664 a.d.]

In the same year of our Lord 664, there happened an eclipse of the sun, on the third day of May, about the tenth hour of the day. In the same year, a sudden pestilence depopulated first the southern parts of Britain, and afterwards attacking the province of the Northumbrians, ravaged the country far and near, and destroyed a great multitude of men. By this plague the aforesaid priest of the Lord, Tuda, was carried off, and was honourably buried in the monastery called Paegnalaech. Moreover, this plague prevailed no less disastrously in the island of Ireland. Many of the nobility, and of the lower ranks of the English nation, were there at that time, who, in the days of the Bishops Finan and Colman, forsaking their native island, retired thither, either for the sake of sacred studies, or of a more ascetic life; and some of them presently devoted themselves faithfully to a monastic life, others chose rather to apply themselves to study, going about from one master's cell to another. The Scots willingly received them all, and took care to supply them with daily food without cost, as also to furnish them with books for their studies, and teaching free of charge.

Among these were Ethelhun and Egbert, two youths of great capacity, of the English nobility. The former of whom was brother to Ethelwin, a man no less beloved by God, who also at a later time went over into Ireland to study, and having been well instructed, returned into his own country, and being made bishop in the province of Lindsey, long and nobly governed the Church. These two being in the monastery which in the language of the Scots is called Rathmelsigi, and having lost all their companions, who were either cut off by the plague, or dispersed into other places, were both seized by the same sickness, and grievously afflicted. Of these, Egbert, (as I was informed by a priest venerable for his age, and of great veracity, who declared he had heard the story from his own lips,) concluding that he was at the point of death, went out of the chamber, where the sick lay, in the morning, and sitting alone in a fitting place, began seriously to reflect upon his past actions, and, being full of compunction at the remembrance of his sins, bedewed his face with tears, and prayed fervently to God that he might not die yet, before he could forthwith more fully make amends for the careless offences which he had committed in his boyhood and infancy, or might further exercise himself in good works. He also made a vow that he would spend all his life abroad and never return into the island of Britain, where he was born; that besides singing the psalms at the canonical hours, he would, unless prevented by bodily infirmity, repeat the whole Psalter daily to the praise of God; and that he would every week fast one whole day and night. Returning home, after his

tears and prayers and vows, he found his companion asleep; and going to bed himself, he began to compose himself to rest. When he had lain quiet awhile, his comrade awaking, looked on him, and said, "Alas! Brother Egbert, what have you done? I was in hopes that we should have entered together into life everlasting; but know that your prayer is granted." For he had learned in a vision what the other had requested, and that he had obtained his request.

In brief, Ethelhun died the next night; but Egbert, throwing off his sickness, recovered and lived a long time after to grace the episcopal office, which he received, by deeds worthy of it; and blessed with many virtues, according to his desire, lately, in the year of our Lord 729, being ninety years of age, he departed to the heavenly kingdom. He passed his life in great perfection of humility, gentleness, continence, simplicity, and justice. Thus he was a great benefactor, both to his own people, and to those nations of the Scots and Picts among whom he lived in exile, by the example of his life, his earnestness in teaching, his authority in reproving, and his piety in giving away of those things which he received from the rich. He also added this to the vows which we have mentioned: during Lent, he would eat but one meal a day, allowing himself nothing but bread and thin milk, and even that by measure. The milk, new the day before, he kept in a vessel, and skimming off the cream in the morning, drank the rest, as has been said, with a little bread. Which sort of abstinence he likewise always observed forty days before the Nativity of our Lord, and as many after the solemnity of Pentecost, that is, of the fifty days' festival.

Chap. XXVIII.

How, when Tuda was dead, Wilfrid was ordained, in Gaul, and Ceadda, among the West Saxons, to be bishops for the province of the Northumbrians. [664 a.d.]

In the meantime, King Alchfrid sent the priest, Wilfrid, to the king of Gaul, in order that he should cause him to be consecrated bishop for himself and his people. That prince sent him to be ordained by Agilbert, of whom we have before spoken, and who, having left Britain, was made bishop of the city of Paris; and by him Wilfrid was honourably consecrated, several bishops meeting together for that purpose in a village belonging to the king, called In Compendio. He stayed some time in the parts beyond the sea for his ordination, and King Oswy, following the example of his son's zeal, sent into Kent a holy man, of modest character, well read in the Scripture, and diligently practising those things which he had learned therein, to be ordained bishop of the church of York. This was a priest called Ceadda, brother to the most reverend prelate Cedd, of whom mention has been often made, and abbot of the monastery of Laestingaeu. With him the king also sent his priest Eadhaed, who was afterwards, in the reign of Egfrid, made bishop of the church of Ripon. Now when they arrived in Kent, they found that Archbishop Deusdedit had departed this life, and no other bishop was as yet appointed in his place; whereupon they betook themselves to the province of the West Saxons, where Wini was bishop, and by him Ceadda was consecrated; two bishops of the British nation, who kept Easter Sunday, as has been often said, contrary to the canonical manner, from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon, being called in to assist at the ordination; for at that time there was no other bishop in all Britain canonically ordained, except Wini.

So Ceadda, being consecrated bishop, began immediately to labour for ecclesiastical truth and purity of doctrine; to apply himself to humility, self-denial, and study; to travel about, not on horseback, but after the manner of the Apostles, on foot, to preach the Gospel in towns, the open country, cottages, villages, and castles; for he was one of the disciples of Aidan, and endeavoured to instruct his people by the same manner of life and character, after his and his own brother Cedd's example. Wilfrid also having been now made a bishop, came into Britain, and in like manner by his teaching brought into the English Church many rules of Catholic observance. Whence it followed, that the Catholic principles daily gained strength, and all the Scots that dwelt in England either conformed to these, or returned into their own country.

Chap. XXIX.

How the priest Wighard was sent from Britain to Rome, to be ordained archbishop; of his death there, and of the letters of the Apostolic Pope giving an account thereof. [667 a.d.]

At this time the most noble kings of the English, Oswy, of the province of the Northumbrians, and Egbert of Kent, consulted together to determine what ought to be done about the state of the English Church, for Oswy, though educated by the Scots, had rightly perceived that the Roman was the Catholic and Apostolic Church. They selected, with the consent and by the choice of the holy Church of the English nation, a priest named Wighard, one of Bishop Deusdedit's clergy, a good man and fitted for the episcopate, and sent him to Rome to be ordained bishop, to the end that, having been raised to the rank of an archbishop, he might ordain Catholic prelates for the Churches of the English nation throughout all Britain. But Wighard, arriving at Rome, was cut off by death, before he could be consecrated bishop, and the following letter was sent back into Britain to King Oswy: —

“To the most excellent lord, our son, Oswy, king of the Saxons, Vitalian, bishop, servant of the servants of God. We have received to our comfort your Excellency's letters; by reading whereof we are acquainted with your most pious devotion and fervent love of the blessed life; and know that by the protecting hand of God you have been converted to the true and Apostolic faith, in hope that even as you reign in your own nation, so you may hereafter reign with Christ. Blessed be the nation, therefore, that has been found worthy to have as its king one so wise and a worshipper of God; forasmuch as he is not himself alone a worshipper of God, but also studies day and night the conversion of all his subjects to the Catholic and Apostolic faith, to the redemption of his own soul. Who would not rejoice at hearing such glad tidings? Who would not exult and be joyful at these good works? For your nation has believed in Christ the Almighty God, according to the words of the Divine prophets, as it is written in Isaiah, ‘In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek.’ And again, ‘Listen, O isles, unto me, and hearken ye people from far.’ And a little after, ‘It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the outcast of Israel. I have given thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my salvation unto the end of the earth.’ And again, ‘Kings shall see, princes also shall arise and worship.’ And immediately after, ‘I have given thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, and possess the scattered heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves.’ And again, ‘I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and have held thine hand, and have kept thee, and have given thee for a covenant of the people, for a

light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoner from the prison, and them that sit in darkness from the prison-house.’

“Behold, most excellent son, how it is plain as day that it was prophesied not only of you, but also of all the nations, that they should believe in Christ, the Creator of all things. Wherefore it behoves your Highness, as being a member of Christ, in all things continually to follow the pious rule of the chief of the Apostles, in celebrating Easter, and in all things delivered by the holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, whose doctrine daily enlightens the hearts of believers, even as the two lights of heaven illumine the world.”

And after some lines, wherein he speaks of celebrating the true Easter uniformly throughout all the world, —

“Finally,” he adds, “we have not been able now, on account of the length of the journey, to find a man, apt to teach, and qualified in all respects to be a bishop, according to the tenor of your letters. But, assuredly, as soon as such a fit person shall be found, we will send him well instructed to your country, that he may, by word of mouth, and through the Divine oracles, with the blessing of God, root out all the enemy’s tares throughout your island. We have received the presents sent by your Highness to the blessed chief of the Apostles, for an eternal memorial of him, and return you thanks, and always pray for your safety with the clergy of Christ. But he that brought these presents has been removed out of this world, and is buried at the threshold of the Apostles, for whom we have been much grieved, because he died here. Nevertheless, we have caused the blessed gifts of the saints, that is, the relics of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, and of the holy martyrs, Laurentius, John, and Paul, and Gregory, and Pancratius, to be given to your servants, the bearers of these our letters, to be by them delivered to your Excellency. And to your consort also, our spiritual daughter, we have by the aforesaid bearers sent a cross, with a gold key to it, made out of the most holy chains of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul; for, hearing of her pious zeal, all the Apostolic see rejoices with us, even as her pious works smell sweet and blossom before God.

“We therefore desire that your Highness should hasten, according to our wish, to dedicate all your island to Christ our God; for assuredly you have for your Protector, the Redeemer of mankind, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who will prosper you in all things, that you may gather together a new people of Christ, establishing there the Catholic and Apostolic faith. For it is written, ‘Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.’ Truly your Highness seeks, and shall obtain, and all your islands shall be made subject to you, even as we desire. Saluting your Excellency with fatherly affection, we never cease to pray to the Divine Goodness, to vouchsafe to assist you and yours in all good works, that you may reign with Christ in the world to come. May the Heavenly Grace preserve your Excellency in safety!”

In the next book we shall have a more suitable occasion to show who was selected and consecrated in Wighard's place.

Chap. XXX.

How the East Saxons, during a pestilence, returned to idolatry, but were soon brought back from their error by the zeal of Bishop Jaruman. [665 a.d.]

At the same time, the Kings Sighere and Sebbi, though themselves subject to Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, governed the province of the East Saxons after Suidhelm, of whom we have spoken above. When that province was suffering from the aforesaid disastrous plague, Sighere, with his part of the people, forsook the mysteries of the Christian faith, and turned apostate. For the king himself, and many of the commons and nobles, loving this life, and not seeking after another, or even not believing in any other, began to restore the temples that had been abandoned, and to adore idols, as if they might by those means be protected against the plague. But Sebbi, his companion and co-heir in the kingdom, with all his people, very devoutly preserved the faith which he had received, and, as we shall show hereafter, ended his faithful life in great felicity.

King Wulfhere, hearing that the faith of the province was in part profaned, sent Bishop Jaruman, who was successor to Trumhere, to correct their error, and recall the province to the true faith. He acted with much discretion, as I was informed by a priest who bore him company in that journey, and had been his fellow labourer in the Word, for he was a religious and good man, and travelling through all the country, far and near, brought back both the people and the aforesaid king to the way of righteousness, so that, either forsaking or destroying the temples and altars which they had erected, they opened the churches, and gladly confessed the Name of Christ, which they had opposed, choosing rather to die in the faith of resurrection in Him, than to live in the abominations of unbelief among their idols. Having thus accomplished their works, the priests and teachers returned home with joy.

Book IV

Chap. I.

How when Deusdedit died, Wighard was sent to Rome to receive the episcopate; but he dying there, Theodore was ordained archbishop, and sent into Britain with the Abbot Hadrian. [664-669 a.d.]

In the above-mentioned year of the aforesaid eclipse and of the pestilence which followed it immediately, in which also Bishop Colman, being overcome by the united effort of the Catholics, returned home, Deusdedit, the sixth bishop of the church of Canterbury, died on the 14th of July. Earconbert, also, king of Kent, departed this life the same month and day; leaving his kingdom to his son Egbert, who held it for nine years. The see then became vacant for no small time, until, the priest Wighard, a man of great learning in the teaching of the Church, of the English race, was sent to Rome by King Egbert and Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, as was briefly mentioned in the foregoing book, with a request that he might be ordained Archbishop of the Church of England; and at the same time presents were sent to the Apostolic pope, and many vessels of gold and silver. Arriving at Rome, where Vitalian presided at that time over the Apostolic see, and having made known to the aforesaid Apostolic pope the occasion of his journey, he was not long after carried off, with almost all his companions who had come with him, by a pestilence which fell upon them.

But the Apostolic pope having consulted about that matter, made diligent inquiry for some one to send to be archbishop of the English Churches. There was then in the monastery of Niridanum, which is not far from Naples in Campania, an abbot called Hadrian, by nation an African, well versed in Holy Scripture, trained in monastic and ecclesiastical teaching, and excellently skilled both in the Greek and Latin tongues. The pope, sending for him, commanded him to accept the bishopric and go to Britain. He answered, that he was unworthy of so great a dignity, but said that he could name another, whose learning and age were fitter for the episcopal office. He proposed to the pope a certain monk named Andrew, belonging to a neighbouring nunnery and he was by all that knew him judged worthy of a bishopric; but the weight of bodily infirmity prevented him from becoming a bishop. Then again Hadrian was urged to accept the episcopate; but he desired a respite, to see whether in time he could find another to be ordained bishop.

There was at that time in Rome, a monk, called Theodore, known to Hadrian, born at Tarsus in Cilicia, a man instructed in secular and Divine writings, as also in Greek and Latin; of high character and venerable age, being sixty-six years old. Hadrian proposed him to the pope to be ordained bishop, and prevailed; but upon the condition that he should himself conduct him into Britain, because he had already travelled through Gaul twice upon different occasions, and was, therefore, better acquainted with the way, and

was, moreover, sufficiently provided with men of his own; as also, to the end that, being his fellow labourer in teaching, he might take special care that Theodore should not, according to the custom of the Greeks, introduce any thing contrary to the truth of the faith into the Church where he presided. Theodore, being ordained subdeacon, waited four months for his hair to grow, that it might be shorn into the shape of a crown; for he had before the tonsure of St. Paul, the Apostle, after the manner of the eastern people. He was ordained by Pope Vitalian, in the year of our Lord 668, on Sunday, the 26th of March, and on the 27th of May was sent with Hadrian to Britain.

They proceeded together by sea to Marseilles, and thence by land to Arles, and having there delivered to John, archbishop of that city, Pope Vitalian's letters of recommendation, were by him detained till Ebroin, the king's mayor of the palace, gave them leave to go where they pleased. Having received the same, Theodore went to Agilbert, bishop of Paris, of whom we have spoken above, and was by him kindly received, and long entertained. But Hadrian went first to Emme, Bishop of the Senones, and then to Faro, bishop of the Meldi, and lived in comfort with them a considerable time; for the approach of winter had obliged them to rest wherever they could. King Egbert, being informed by sure messengers that the bishop they had asked of the Roman prelate was in the kingdom of the Franks, sent thither his reeve, Raedfrid, to conduct him. He, having arrived there, with Ebroin's leave took Theodore and conveyed him to the port called Quentavic; where, falling sick, he stayed some time, and as soon as he began to recover, sailed over into Britain. But Ebroin detained Hadrian, suspecting that he went on some mission from the Emperor to the kings of Britain, to the prejudice of the kingdom of which he at that time had the chief charge; however, when he found that in truth he had never had any such commission, he discharged him, and permitted him to follow Theodore. As soon as he came to him, Theodore gave him the monastery of the blessed Peter the Apostle, where the archbishops of Canterbury are wont to be buried, as I have said before; for at his departure, the Apostolic lord had enjoined upon Theodore that he should provide for him in his province, and give him a suitable place to live in with his followers.

Chap. II.

How Theodore visited all places; how the Churches of the English began to be instructed in the study of Holy Scripture, and in the Catholic truth; and how Putta was made bishop of the Church of Rochester in the room of Damianus. [669 a.d.]

Theodore came to his Church in the second year after his consecration, on Sunday, the 27th of May, and spent in it twenty-one years, three months, and twenty-six days. Soon after, he visited all the island, wherever the tribes of the English dwelt, for he was gladly received and heard by all persons; and everywhere attended and assisted by Hadrian, he taught the right rule of life, and the canonical custom of celebrating Easter. This was the first archbishop whom all the English Church consented to obey. And forasmuch as both of them were, as has been said before, fully instructed both in sacred and in secular letters, they gathered a crowd of disciples, and rivers of wholesome knowledge daily flowed from them to water the hearts of their hearers; and, together with the books of Holy Scripture, they also taught them the metrical art, astronomy, and ecclesiastical arithmetic. A testimony whereof is, that there are still living at this day some of their scholars, who are as well versed in the Greek and Latin tongues as in their own, in which they were born. Nor were there ever happier times since the English came into Britain; for having brave Christian kings, they were a terror to all barbarous nations, and the minds of all men were bent upon the joys of the heavenly kingdom of which they had but lately heard; and all who desired to be instructed in sacred studies had masters at hand to teach them.

From that time also they began in all the churches of the English to learn Church music, which till then had been only known in Kent. And, excepting James, of whom we have spoken above, the first teacher of singing in the churches of the Northumbrians was Eddi, surnamed Stephen, invited from Kent by the most reverend Wilfrid, who was the first of the bishops of the English nation that learned to deliver to the churches of the English the Catholic manner of life.

Theodore, journeying through all parts, ordained bishops in fitting places, and with their assistance corrected such things as he found faulty. Among the rest, when he charged Bishop Ceadda with not having been duly consecrated, he, with great humility, answered, "If you know that I have not duly received episcopal ordination, I willingly resign the office, for I never thought myself worthy of it; but, though unworthy, for obedience sake I submitted, when bidden to undertake it." Theodore, hearing his humble answer, said that he should not resign the bishopric, and he himself completed his ordination after the Catholic manner. Now at the time when Deusdedit died, and a bishop for the church of Canterbury was by request ordained and sent, Wilfrid was also

sent from Britain into Gaul to be ordained; and because he returned before Theodore, he ordained priests and deacons in Kent till the archbishop should come to his see. But when Theodore came to the city of Rochester, where the bishopric had been long vacant by the death of Damian, he ordained a man named Putta, trained rather in the teaching of the Church and more addicted to simplicity of life than active in worldly affairs, but specially skilful in Church music, after the Roman use, which he had learned from the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory.

Chap. III.

How the above-mentioned Ceadda was made Bishop of the province of Mercians. Of his life, death, and burial. [669 a.d.]

At that time, the province of the Mercians was governed by King Wulfhere, who, on the death of Jaruman, desired of Theodore that a bishop should be given to him and his people; but Theodore would not ordain a new one for them, but requested of King Oswy that Ceadda might be their bishop. He then lived in retirement at his monastery, which is at Laestingaeu, while Wilfrid administered the bishopric of York, and of all the Northumbrians, and likewise of the Picts, as far as King Oswy was able to extend his dominions. And, seeing that it was the custom of that most reverend prelate to go about the work of the Gospel everywhere on foot rather than on horseback, Theodore commanded him to ride whenever he had a long journey to undertake; and finding him very unwilling, in his zeal and love for his pious labour, he himself, with his own hands, lifted him on horseback; for he knew him to be a holy man, and therefore obliged him to ride wherever he had need to go. Ceadda having received the bishopric of the Mercians and of Lindsey, took care to administer it with great perfection of life, according to the example of the ancient fathers. King Wulfhere also gave him land of the extent of fifty families, to build a monastery, at the place called Ad Barvae, or “At the Wood,” in the province of Lindsey, wherein traces of the monastic life instituted by him continue to this day.

He had his episcopal see in the place called Lyccidfelth, in which he also died, and was buried, and where the see of the succeeding bishops of that province continues to this day. He had built himself a retired habitation not far from the church, wherein he was wont to pray and read in private, with a few, it might be seven or eight of the brethren, as often as he had any spare time from the labour and ministry of the Word. When he had most gloriously governed the church in that province for two years and a half, the Divine Providence so ordaining, there came round a season like that of which Ecclesiastes says, “That there is a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;” for a plague fell upon them, sent from Heaven, which, by means of the death of the flesh, translated the living stones of the Church from their earthly places to the heavenly building. And when, after many of the Church of that most reverend prelate had been taken away out of the flesh, his hour also drew near wherein he was to pass out of this world to the Lord, it happened one day that he was in the aforesaid habitation with only one brother, called Owini, his other companions having upon some due occasion returned to the church. Now Owini was a monk of great merit, having forsaken the world with the sole desire of the heavenly reward; worthy in all respects to have the secrets of the Lord revealed to him in special wise, and

worthy to have credit given by his hearers to what he said. For he had come with Queen Ethelthryth from the province of the East Angles, and was the chief of her thegns, and governor of her house. As the fervour of his faith increased, resolving to renounce the secular life, he did not go about it slothfully, but so entirely forsook the things of this world, that, quitting all that he had, clad in a plain garment, and carrying an axe and hatchet in his hand, he came to the monastery of the same most reverend father, which is called Laestingaeu. He said that he was not entering the monastery in order to live in idleness, as some do, but to labour; which he also confirmed by practice; for as he was less capable of studying the Scriptures, the more earnestly he applied himself to the labour of his hands. So then, forasmuch as he was reverent and devout, he was kept by the bishop in the aforesaid habitation with the brethren, and whilst they were engaged within in reading, he was without, doing such things as were necessary.

One day, when he was thus employed abroad, his companions having gone to the church, as I began to tell, and the bishop was alone reading or praying in the oratory of that place, on a sudden, as he afterwards said, he heard a sweet sound of singing and rejoicing descend from heaven to earth. This sound he said he first heard coming from the sky in the south-east, above the winter sunrise, and that afterwards it drew near him gradually, till it came to the roof of the oratory where the bishop was, and entering therein, filled all the place and encompassed it about. He listened attentively to what he heard, and after about half an hour, perceived the same song of joy to ascend from the roof of the said oratory, and to return to heaven in the same way as it came, with unspeakable sweetness. When he had stood some time amazed, and earnestly considering in his mind what this might be, the bishop opened the window of the oratory, and making a sound with his hand, as he was often wont to do, bade anyone who might be without to come in to him. He went hastily in, and the bishop said to him, "Make haste to the church, and cause those seven brothers to come hither, and do you come with them." When they were come, he first admonished them to preserve the virtue of love and peace among themselves, and towards all the faithful; and with unwearied earnestness to follow the rules of monastic discipline, which they had either been taught by him, and had seen him observe, or had found in the words and actions of the former fathers. Then he added that the day of his death was at hand; for, said he, "that gracious guest, who was wont to visit our brethren, has vouchsafed also to come to me this day, and to call me out of this world. Return, therefore, to the church, and speak to the brethren, that in their prayers they commend my departure to the Lord, and that they be mindful to prepare for their own, the hour whereof is uncertain, by watching, and prayer, and good works."

When he had spoken thus much and more to the same end, and they, having received his blessing, had gone away in great sorrow, he who had heard the heavenly song returned alone, and prostrating himself on the

ground, said, "I beseech you, father, may I be permitted to ask a question?"—"Ask what you will," answered the bishop. Then he said, "I beseech you to tell me what was that song which I heard as of a joyful company coming from heaven upon this oratory, and after some time returning to heaven?" The bishop answered: "If you heard the singing, and know of the coming of the heavenly company, I command you, in the Name of the Lord, that you tell it not to any before my death. But in truth they were angelic spirits, who came to call me to my heavenly reward, which I have always loved and longed after, and they promised that they would return seven days hence, and take me away with them." Which was indeed fulfilled, as had been said to him; for being presently seized with bodily infirmity, and the same daily increasing, on the seventh day, as had been promised to him, when he had prepared for death by receiving the Body and Blood of our Lord, his saintly soul being delivered from the prison of the body, led, as may justly be believed, by the attendant angels, he departed to the joys of Heaven.

It is no wonder that he joyfully beheld the day of his death, or rather the day of the Lord, the coming whereof he had always been mindful to await with earnest expectation. For with all his merits of continence, humility, teaching, prayer, voluntary poverty, and other virtues, he was so filled with the fear of the Lord, so mindful of his latter end in all his actions, that, as I was wont to hear from one of the brothers who instructed me in the Scriptures, and who had been bred in his monastery, and under his direction, whose name was Trumbert, if it happened that there blew a sudden strong gust of wind, when he was reading or doing any other thing, he forthwith called upon the Lord for mercy, and begged that it might be granted to all mankind. If the wind grew stronger, he closed his book, and fell on his face, praying still more earnestly. But, if a violent storm of wind or rain came on, or if the earth and air were filled with the terror of thunder and lightning, he would go to the church, and anxiously devote himself with all his heart to prayers and psalms till the weather became calm. Being asked by his brethren why he did so, he answered, "Have not you read— 'The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice. Yea, he sent out his arrows and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.' For the Lord moves the air, raises the winds, hurls lightning, and thunders from heaven, to rouse the inhabitants of the earth to fear him; to put them in mind of judgement to come; to dispel their pride, and confound their boldness, by recalling to their thoughts that dread time, when the heavens and the earth being on fire, He will come in the clouds, with great power and majesty, to judge the quick and the dead. Wherefore," said he, "it behoves us to respond to His heavenly admonition with due fear and love; that, as often as the air is moved and He puts forth His hand threatening to strike, but does not yet let it fall, we may immediately implore His mercy; and searching the recesses of our hearts, and casting out the dregs of our sins, we may carefully so act that we may never deserve to be struck down."

With this revelation and narrative of the aforesaid brother, concerning the death of this prelate, agrees the account of the most reverend Father Egbert, above spoken of, who long and zealously led a monastic life with the same Ceadda, when both were youths, in Ireland, in prayer and self-denial and meditation on the Holy Scriptures. But whereas Ceadda afterwards returned into his own country, Egbert continued to live abroad for the Lord's sake till the end of his life. A long time after, Hygbald, a man of great holiness and continence, who was an abbot in the province of Lindsey, came from Britain to visit him, and whilst, as became holy men, they were discoursing of the life of the former fathers, and rejoicing to imitate the same, mention was made of the most reverend prelate, Ceadda; whereupon Egbert said, "I know a man in this island, still in the flesh, who, when Ceadda passed away from this world, saw the soul of his brother Cedd, with a company of angels, descending from heaven, who, having taken Ceadda's soul along with them, returned again to the heavenly kingdom." Whether he said this of himself, or some other, we do not certainly know; but because it was said by so great a man, there can be no doubt of the truth thereof.

Ceadda died on the 2nd of March, and was first buried by St. Mary's Church, but afterwards, when the church of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, Peter, was built in the same place, his bones were translated into it. In both which places, as a testimony of his virtue, frequent miracles of healing are wont to be wrought. And of late, a certain man that had a frenzy, wandering about everywhere, arrived there in the evening, unperceived or disregarded by the keepers of the place, and having rested there the whole of the night, came forth in his right mind the next morning, to the surprise and joy of all, and told what a cure had been wrought on him through the goodness of God. The place of the sepulchre is a wooden monument, made like a little house, covered, having a hole in the wall, through which those that go thither for devotion are wont to put in their hand and take out some of the dust. This they put into water and give to sick cattle or men to drink, whereupon they are presently eased of their infirmity, and restored to their desired health.

In his place, Theodore ordained Wynfrid, a man of good and sober life, to preside, like his predecessors, over the bishoprics of the Mercians, the Midland Angles, and Lindsey, of all which, Wulfhere, who was still living, was king. Wynfrid was one of the clergy of the prelate he succeeded, and had for no small time filled the office of deacon under him.

Chap. IV.

How Bishop Colman, having left Britain, built two monasteries in the country of the Scots; the one for the Scots, the other for the English whom he had taken along with him. [667 a.d.]

In the meantime, Colman, the Scottish bishop, departing from Britain, took along with him all the Scots whom he had gathered about him in the isle of Lindisfarne, and also about thirty of the English nation, for both these companies had been trained in duties of the monastic life; and leaving some brothers in his church, he went first to the isle of Hii, whence he had been sent to preach the Word of God to the English nation. Afterwards he retired to a small island, which is to the west of Ireland, and at some distance from it, called in the language of the Scots, Inisboufinde, the Island of the White Heifer. Arriving there, he built a monastery, and placed in it the monks he had brought of both nations. But they could not agree among themselves, by reason that the Scots, in the summer season, when the harvest was to be brought in, leaving the monastery, wandered about through places known to them; but returned again the next winter, and desired to use in common what the English had provided. Colman sought to put an end to this dissension, and travelling about far and near, he found a place in the island of Ireland fitted to be the site of a monastery, which, in the language of the Scots, is called Mageo. He bought a small part of it of the chief to whom it belonged, to build his monastery thereon; upon condition, that the monks dwelling there should pray to the Lord for him who let them have the place. Then at once building a monastery, with the assistance of the chief and all the neighbouring people, he placed the English there, leaving the Scots in the aforesaid island. This monastery is to this day occupied by English inhabitants; being the same that, grown from a small beginning to be very large, is commonly called Muigeo; and as all have long since been brought to adopt better customs, it contains a notable society of monks, who are gathered there from the province of the English, and live by the labour of their own hands, after the example of the venerable fathers, under a rule and a canonical abbot, in much continence and singleness of life.

Chap. V.

Of the death of the kings Oswy and Egbert, and of the synod held at the place Herutford, in which Archbishop Theodore presided. [670-673 a.d.]

In the year of our Lord 670, being the second year after Theodore arrived in England, Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, fell sick, and died, in the fifty-eighth year of his age. He at that time bore so great affection to the Roman Apostolic usages, that he had designed, if he recovered from his sickness, to go to Rome, and there to end his days at the holy places, having asked Bishop Wilfrid, with a promise of no small gift of money, to conduct him on his journey. He died on the 15th of February, leaving his son Egfrid his successor in the kingdom. In the third year of his reign, Theodore assembled a council of bishops, along with many other teachers of the church, who loved and were acquainted with the canonical statutes of the fathers. When they were met together, he began, in the spirit which became a bishop, to enjoin the observance of such things as were in accordance with the unity and the peace of the Church. The purport of the proceedings of this synod is as follows: —

“In the name of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who reigns for ever and governs His Church, it was thought meet that we should assemble, according to the custom prescribed in the venerable canons, to treat about the necessary affairs of the Church. We met on the 24th day of September, the first indiction, at the place which is called Herutford: I, Theodore, albeit unworthy, appointed by the Apostolic see bishop of the church of Canterbury; our fellow priest and brother, the most reverend Bisi, bishop of the East Angles; and with us also our brother and fellow priest, Wilfrid, bishop of the nation of the Northumbrians, represented by his proxies. There were present also our brothers and fellow priests, Putta, bishop of the Kentish castle, called Rochester; Leutherius, bishop of the West Saxons, and Wynfrid, bishop of the province of the Mercians. When we were all met together, and had sat down in order, I said, ‘I beseech you, most dear brothers, for the fear and love of our Redeemer, that we may all treat in common on behalf of our faith; to the end that whatsoever has been decreed and defined by holy and approved fathers, may be inviolably observed by all of us.’ This and much more I spoke tending to charity and the preservation of the unity of the Church; and when I had ended my preface, I asked every one of them in order, whether they consented to observe the things that had been of old canonically decreed by the fathers? To which all our fellow priests answered, ‘Most assuredly we are all resolved to observe willingly and heartily whatsoever is laid down in the canons of the holy fathers.’ Then forthwith I produced the said book of canons, and in the presence of them all showed ten articles in the same, which I had marked in several places, because I knew them to be of the most importance to us, and entreated that these might be most particularly received by them all.

“Article I. That we all in common keep the holy day of Easter on the Sunday after the fourteenth moon of the first month.

“II. That no bishop intrude into the diocese of another, but be satisfied with the government of the people committed to him.

“III. That it shall not be lawful for any bishop to disturb in any matter monasteries dedicated to God, nor to take away forcibly any part of their property.

“IV. That the monks themselves do not move from one place to another, that is, from monastery to monastery, unless with the consent of their own abbot; but that they continue in the obedience which they promised at the time of their conversion.

“V. That no clerk, forsaking his own bishop, shall wander about, or be anywhere received without commendatory letters from his diocesan. But if he shall be once received, and will not return when summoned, both the receiver, and he that is received shall be under excommunication.

“VI. That bishops and clergy, when travelling, shall be content with the hospitality that is afforded them; and that it be not lawful for any one of them to exercise any priestly function without leave of the bishop in whose diocese he is known to be.

“VII. That a synod be assembled twice a year; but on account of divers hindrances, it was approved by all, that we should meet once a year, on the 1st of August, at the place called Clofeshoch.

“VIII. That no bishop, through ambition, shall set himself above another; but that they shall all observe the time and order of their consecration.

“IX. The ninth Article was discussed in common, to the effect that more bishops should be made, as the number of the faithful increased; but this matter for the present was passed over.

“X. Of marriages; that nothing be allowed but lawful wedlock; that none commit incest; no man leave his own wife, except it be, as the holy Gospel teaches, for fornication. And if any man shall put away his own wife, lawfully joined to him in matrimony, that he take no other, if he wishes to be a true Christian, but continue as he is, or else be reconciled to his own wife.

“These articles being thus discussed and defined in common, to the end, that for the future, no stumbling-block of contention might arise from any one of us, or that things be falsely set forth, it was thought fit that every one of us should, by the subscription of his own hand, confirm all the particulars so defined. Which judgement, as defined by us, I dictated to be written by Titillus our notary. Given in the month and indiction aforesaid. Whosoever, therefore, shall attempt in any way to oppose or infringe this decision, confirmed by our consent, and by the subscription of our hands, according to the decree of the canons, must know, that he is excluded from all sacerdotal functions, and from our fellowship. May the Grace of God keep us in safety, living in the unity of His Holy Church.”

This synod was held in the year of our Lord 673. In which year Egbert, king of Kent, died in the month of July; his brother Hlothere succeeded him on the throne, which he held eleven years and seven months. Bisi, the bishop of the East Angles, who is said to have been in the aforesaid synod, a man of great saintliness and piety, was successor to Boniface, before spoken of; for when Boniface died, after having been bishop seventeen years, he was ordained by Theodore and made bishop in his place. Whilst he was still alive, but hindered by grievous infirmity from administering his episcopal functions, two bishops, Aecci and Badwin, were elected and consecrated in his place; from which time to the present, that province has had two bishops.

Chap. VI.

How Wynfrid being deposed, Sexwulf received his bishopric, and Earconwald was made bishop of the East Saxons. [675 a.d.]

Not long after these events, Theodore, the archbishop, taking offence at some act of disobedience of Wynfrid, bishop of the Mercians, deposed him from his bishopric when he had held it but a few years, and in his place ordained Sexwulf bishop, who was founder and abbot of the monastery which is called Medeshamstead, in the country of the Gyrwas. Wynfrid, thus deposed, returned to his monastery which is called Ad Barvae, and there ended his life in holy conversation.

Theodore then also appointed Earconwald, bishop of the East Saxons, in the city of London, over whom at that time reigned Sebbi and Sighere, of whom mention has been made above. This Earconwald's life and conversation, as well when he was bishop as before that time, is said to have been most holy, as is even now testified by heavenly miracles; for to this day, his horse-litter, in which he was wont to be carried when sick, is kept by his disciples, and continues to cure many of fevers and other ailments; and not only sick persons who are laid under that litter, or close by it, are cured; but the very splinters cut from it, when carried to the sick, are wont immediately to bring healing to them.

This man, before he was made bishop, had built two famous monasteries, the one for himself, and the other for his sister Ethelburg, and established them both in regular discipline of the best kind. That for himself was in the district of Sudergeona, by the river Thames, at a place called Cerotaesei, that is, the Island of Cerot; that for his sister in the province of the East Saxons, at a place called In Berecingum, wherein she might be a mother and nurse of women devoted to God. Being put into the government of that monastery, she showed herself in all respects worthy of her brother the bishop, by her own holy life and by her regular and pious care of those under her rule, as was also manifested by heavenly miracles.

Chap. VII.

How it was indicated by a light from heaven where the bodies of the nuns should be buried in the monastery of Berecingum. [675 a.d. ?]

In this monastery many miracles were wrought, accounts of which have been committed to writing by those who were acquainted with them, that their memory might be preserved, and succeeding generations edified, and these are in the possession of many persons; some of them we also have taken pains to include in our History of the Church. At the time of the pestilence, already often mentioned, which ravaged all the country far and wide, it had also seized on that part of this monastery where the men abode, and they were daily hurried away to the Lord. The careful mother of the community began often to inquire of the sisters, when they were gathered together; in what part of the monastery they desired to be buried and a cemetery to be made, when the same affliction should fall upon that part of the monastery in which the handmaids of the Lord dwelt together apart from the men, and they should be snatched away out of this world by the same destruction as the rest. Receiving no certain answer from the sisters, though she often questioned them, she and all of them received a most certain answer from the Divine Providence. For one night, after matins had been sung, and those handmaids of Christ had gone out of their chapel to the tombs of the brothers who had departed this life before them, and were singing the customary songs of praise to the Lord, on a sudden a light from heaven, like a great sheet, came down upon them all, and struck them with such amazement, that, in consternation, they even left off singing their hymn. But that resplendent light, in comparison wherewith the sun at noon-day might seem dark, soon after, rising from that place, removed to the south side of the monastery, that is, to the westward of the chapel, and having continued there some time, and rested upon those parts, in the sight of them all withdrew itself again to heaven, leaving no doubt in the minds of all, but that the same light, which was to lead or to receive the souls of those handmaids of Christ into Heaven, also showed the place in which their bodies were to rest and await the day of the resurrection. The radiance of this light was so great, that one of the older brethren, who at the same time was in their chapel with another younger than himself, related in the morning, that the rays of light which came in at the crannies of the doors and windows, seemed to exceed the utmost brightness of daylight.

Chap. VIII.

How a little boy, dying in the same monastery, called upon a virgin that was to follow him; and how another nun, at the point of leaving her body, saw some small part of the future glory. [675 a.d.?]

There was, in the same monastery, a boy, not above three years old, called Aesica; who, by reason of his tender age, was being brought up among the virgins dedicated to God, there to learn his lessons. This child being seized by the aforesaid pestilence, when his last hour was come, called three times upon one of the virgins consecrated to Christ, speaking to her by her own name, as if she had been present, Eadgyth! Eadgyth! Eadgyth! and thus ending his temporal life, entered into that which is eternal. The virgin, to whom he called, as he was dying, was immediately seized, where she was, with the same sickness, and departing this life the same day on which she had been summoned, followed him that called her into the heavenly kingdom.

Likewise, one of the same handmaids of God, being smitten with the same disease, and reduced to the last extremity, began on a sudden, about midnight, to cry out to them that ministered to her, desiring they would put out the lamp that was lighted there. And, when she had done this many times, and yet no one did her will, at last she said, "I know that you think I am raving, when I say this, but be assured that it is not so; for I tell you truly, that I see this house filled with so great a light, that that lamp of yours seems to me to be altogether dark." And when still no one replied to what she said, or did her bidding, she added, "Burn your lamp, then, as long as you will; but know, that it is not my light, for my light will come to me at the dawn of day." Then she began to tell, that a certain man of God, who had died that same year, had appeared to her, telling her that at the break of day she should depart to the eternal light. The truth of which vision was speedily proved by the maiden's death as soon as the day appeared.

Chap. IX.

Of the signs which were shown from Heaven when the mother of that community departed this life. [675 a.d.?]

Now when Ethelburg herself, the pious mother of that community devoted to God, was about to be taken out of this world, a wonderful vision appeared to one of the sisters, called Tortgyth; who, having lived many years in that monastery, always endeavoured, in all humility and sincerity, to serve God herself, and to help the mother to maintain regular discipline, by instructing and reproving the younger ones. Now, in order that her virtue might, according to the Apostle, be made perfect in weakness, she was suddenly seized with a most grievous bodily disease, under which, through the merciful providence of our Redeemer, she was sorely tried for the space of nine years; to the end, that whatever stain of evil remained amidst her virtues, either through ignorance or neglect, might all be purified in the furnace of long tribulation. This woman, going out of the chamber where she abode one night, at dusk, plainly saw as it were a human body, which was brighter than the sun, wrapped in fine linen, and lifted up on high, being taken out of the house in which the sisters used to sleep. Then looking earnestly to see what it was that drew up that appearance of the glorious body which she beheld, she perceived that it was raised on high as it were by cords brighter than gold, until, entering into the open heavens, it could no longer be seen by her. Reflecting on this vision, she made no doubt that some one of the community would soon die, and her soul be lifted up to heaven by the good works which she had wrought, as it were by golden cords. And so in truth it befell; for a few days after, the beloved of God, Ethelburg, mother of that community, was delivered out of the prison of the flesh; and her life is proved to have been such that no one who knew her ought to doubt that an entrance into the heavenly country was open to her, when she departed from this life.

There was also, in the same monastery, a certain nun, of noble origin in this world, and still nobler in the love of the world to come; who had, for many years, been so disabled in all her body, that she could not move a single limb. When she heard that the body of the venerable abbess had been carried into the church, till it should be buried, she desired to be carried thither, and to be placed bending towards it, after the manner of one praying; which being done, she spoke to her as if she had been living, and entreated her that she would obtain of the mercy of our pitiful Creator, that she might be delivered from such great and long-continued pains; nor was it long before her prayer was heard: for being delivered from the flesh twelve days after, she exchanged her temporal afflictions for an eternal reward.

For three years after the death of her Superior, the aforesaid handmaid of Christ, Tortgyth, was detained in this life and was so far spent with the

sickness before mentioned, that her bones scarce held together. At last, when the time of her release was at hand, she not only lost the use of her other limbs, but also of her tongue; in which state having continued three days and as many nights, she was, on a sudden, restored by a spiritual vision, and opened her lips and eyes, and looking up to heaven, began thus to speak to the vision which she saw: "Very acceptable to me is thy coming, and thou art welcome!" Having so said, she was silent awhile, as it were, waiting for the answer of him whom she saw and to whom she spoke; then, as if somewhat displeased, she said, "I can in no wise gladly suffer this;" then pausing awhile, she said again, "If it can by no means be to-day, I beg that the delay may not be long;" and again holding her peace a short while, she concluded thus; "If it is certainly so determined, and the decree cannot be altered, I beg that it may be no longer deferred than this next night." Having so said, and being asked by those about her with whom she talked, she said, "With my most dear mother, Ethelburg;" by which they understood, that she was come to acquaint her that the time of her departure was at hand; for, as she had desired, after one day and night, she was delivered alike from the bonds of the flesh and of her infirmity and entered into the joys of eternal salvation.

Chap. X.

How a blind woman, praying in the burial-place of that monastery, was restored to her sight. [675 a.d.?]

Hildilid, a devout handmaid of God, succeeded Ethelburg in the office of abbess and presided over that monastery with great vigour many years, till she was of an extreme old age, in the observance of regular discipline, and carefully providing all things for the common use. The narrowness of the space where the monastery is built, led her to determine that the bones of the servants and handmaidens of Christ, who had been there buried, should be taken up, and should all be translated into the church of the Blessed Mother of God, and interred in one place. How often a brightness of heavenly light was seen there, when this was done, and a fragrant of wonderful sweetness arose, and what other signs were revealed, whosoever reads will find in the book from which we have taken these tales.

But in truth, I think it by no means fit to pass over the miracle of healing, which the same book informs us was wrought in the cemetery of that community dedicated to God. There lived in that neighbourhood a certain thegn, whose wife was seized with a sudden dimness in her eyes, and as the malady increased daily, it became so burdensome to her, that she could not see the least glimpse of light. Having continued some time wrapped in the night of this blindness, on a sudden she bethought herself that she might recover her lost sight, if she were carried to the monastery of the nuns, and there prayed at the relics of the saints. Nor did she lose any time in fulfilling that which she had conceived in her mind: for being conducted by her maids to the monastery, which was very near, and professing that she had perfect faith that she should be there healed, she was led into the cemetery, and having long prayed there on her knees, she did not fail to be heard, for as she rose from prayer, before she went out of the place, she received the gift of sight which she had desired; and whereas she had been led thither by the hands of her maids, she now returned home joyfully without help: as if she had lost the light of this world to no other end than that she might show by her recovery how great a light is vouchsafed to the saints of Christ in Heaven, and how great a grace of healing power.

Chap. XI.

How Sebbi, king of the same province, ended his life in a monastery. [694
a.d.]

At that time, as the same little book informs us, Sebbi, a very devout man, of whom mention has been made above, governed the kingdom of the East Saxons. His mind was set on religious acts, frequent prayer and pious fruits of almsgiving; he esteemed a private and monastic life better than all the wealth and honours of his kingdom, and he would have long before left his kingdom and adopted that life, had not his wife firmly refused to be divorced from him; for which reason many were of opinion and often said that a man of such a disposition ought rather to have been made a bishop than a king. When he had spent thirty years as a king and a soldier of the heavenly kingdom, he fell into great bodily infirmity, of which he afterwards died, and he admonished his wife, that they should then at least together devote themselves to the service of God, since they could no longer together enjoy, or rather serve, the world. Having with much difficulty obtained this of her, he went to Waldhere, bishop of London, who had succeeded Earconwald, and with his blessing received the religious habit, which he had long desired. He also carried to him a considerable sum of money, to be given to the poor, reserving nothing to himself, but rather coveting to remain poor in spirit for the sake of the kingdom of Heaven.

When the aforesaid sickness increased, and he perceived the day of his death to be drawing near, being a man of a royal disposition, he began to apprehend lest, when in great pain, at the approach of death, he might commit anything unworthy of his character, either by word or gesture. Wherefore, calling to him the aforesaid bishop of London, in which city he then was, he entreated him that none might be present at his death, besides the bishop himself, and two of his own attendants. The bishop having promised that he would most willingly grant his request, not long after the man of God composed himself to sleep, and saw a consoling vision, which took from him all anxiety concerning the aforesaid uneasiness; and, moreover, showed him on what day he was to end his life. For, as he afterwards related, he saw three men in shining garments come to him; one of whom sat down by his bed, whilst his companions who had come with him stood and inquired about the state of the sick man they had come to visit, and he said that the king's soul should quit his body without any pain, and with a great splendour of light; and told him that he should die the third day after. Both these things came to pass, as he had learnt from the vision; for on the third day after, at the ninth hour, he suddenly fell, as it were, into a light slumber, and without any sense of pain he gave up the ghost.

A stone coffin had been prepared for his burial, but when they came to lay him in it, they found his body a span longer than the coffin. Hereupon they

chipped away as much of the stone as they could, and made the coffin about two inches longer; but not even so would it contain the body. Wherefore because of this difficulty of entombing him, they had thoughts either to get another coffin, or else to shorten the body, by bending it at the knees, if they could, so that the coffin might contain it. But Heaven interposed and a miracle prevented the execution of either of those designs; for on a sudden, in the presence of the bishop and Sighard, who was the son of that same king and monk, and who reigned after him jointly with his brother Suefred, and of no small number of men, that coffin was found to fit the length of the body, insomuch that a pillow might even be put in at the head; and at the feet the coffin was four inches longer than the body. He was buried in the church of the blessed teacher of the Gentiles, by whose doctrine he had learned to hope for heavenly things.

Chap. XII.

How Haedde succeeded Leutherius in the bishopric of the West Saxons; how Cuichelm succeeded Putta in the bishopric of the church of Rochester, and was himself succeeded by Gebmund; and who were then bishops of the Northumbrians. [673-681 a.d.]

Leutherius was the fourth bishop of the West Saxons; for Birinus was the first, Agilbert the second, and Wini the third. When Coinwalch, in whose reign the said Leutherius was made bishop, died, the sub-kings took upon them the government of the nation, and dividing it among themselves, held it for about ten years; and during their rule he died, and Haedde succeeded him in the bishopric, having been consecrated by Theodore, in the city of London. During his episcopate, Caedwalla, having subdued and removed the sub-kings, took upon himself the supreme authority. When he had held it for two years, and whilst the same bishop still governed the church, at length impelled by love of the heavenly kingdom, he quitted it and, going away to Rome, ended his days there, as shall be said more fully hereafter.

In the year of our Lord 676, when Ethelred, king of the Mercians, ravaged Kent with a hostile army, and profaned churches and monasteries, without regard to pity, or the fear of God, in the general destruction he laid waste the city of Rochester; Putta, who was bishop, was absent at that time, but when he understood that his church was ravaged, and everything taken away from it, he went to Sexwulf, bishop of the Mercians, and having received of him a certain church, and a small piece of land, ended his days there in peace; in no way endeavouring to restore his bishopric, for, as has been said above, he was more industrious in ecclesiastical than in worldly affairs; serving God only in that church, and going wherever he was desired, to teach Church music. Theodore consecrated Cuichelm bishop of Rochester in his stead; but he, not long after, departing from his bishopric for want of necessities, and withdrawing to other parts, Gebmund was put in his place by Theodore.

In the year of our Lord 678, which is the eighth of the reign of Egfrid, in the month of August, appeared a star, called a comet, which continued for three months, rising in the morning, and sending forth, as it were, a tall pillar of radiant flame. The same year a dissension broke out between King Egfrid and the most reverend prelate, Wilfrid, who was driven from his see, and two bishops substituted for him, to preside over the nation of the Northumbrians, namely, Bosa, to govern the province of the Deiri; and Eata that of the Bernicians; the former having his episcopal see in the city of York, the latter either in the church of Hagustald, or of Lindisfarne; both of them promoted to the episcopal dignity from a community of monks. With them also Eadhaed was ordained bishop for the province of Lindsey, which King Egfrid had but newly acquired, having defeated Wulfhere and put him to flight; and this was

the first bishop of its own which that province had; the second was Ethelwin; the third Edgar; the fourth Cynibert, who is there at present. Before Eadhaed, Sexwulf was bishop as well of that province as of the Mercians and Midland Angles; so that, when expelled from Lindsey, he continued in the government of those provinces. Eadhaed, Bosa, and Eata, were ordained at York by archbishop Theodore; who also, three years after the departure of Wilfrid, added two bishops to their number: Tunbert, appointed to the church of Hagustald, Eata still continuing in that of Lindisfarne; and Trumwine to the province of the Picts, which at that time was subject to English rule. Eadhaed returning from Lindsey, because Ethelred had recovered that province, was placed by Theodore over the church of Ripon.

Chap. XIII.

How Bishop Wilfrid converted the province of the South Saxons to Christ. [681 a.d.]

But Wilfrid was expelled from his bishopric, and having long travelled in many lands, went to Rome, and afterwards returned to Britain. Though he could not, by reason of the enmity of the aforesaid king, be received into his own country or diocese, yet he could not be restrained from the ministry of the Gospel; for, taking his way into the province of the South Saxons, which extends from Kent to the south and west, as far as the West Saxons, containing land of 7,000 families, and was at that time still in bondage to pagan rites, he administered to them the Word of faith, and the Baptism of salvation. Ethelwalch, king of that nation, had been, not long before, baptized in the province of the Mercians, at the instance of King Wulfhere, who was present, and received him as his godson when he came forth from the font, and in token of this adoption gave him two provinces, to wit, the Isle of Wight, and the province of the Meanware, in the country of the West Saxons. The bishop, therefore, with the king's consent, or rather to his great joy, cleansed in the sacred font the foremost ealdormen and thegns of that country; and the priests, Eappa, and Padda, and Burghelm, and Oiddi, either then, or afterwards, baptized the rest of the people. The queen, whose name was Eabae, had been baptized in her own country, the province of the Hwiccas. She was the daughter of Eanfrid, the brother of Aenhere, who were both Christians, as were their people; but all the province of the South Saxons was ignorant of the Name of God and the faith. But there was among them a certain monk of the Scottish nation, whose name was Dicul, who had a very small monastery, at the place called Bosanhamm, encompassed by woods and seas, and in it there were five or six brothers, who served the Lord in humility and poverty; but none of the natives cared either to follow their course of life, or hear their preaching.

But Bishop Wilfrid, while preaching the Gospel to the people, not only delivered them from the misery of eternal damnation, but also from a terrible calamity of temporal death. For no rain had fallen in that district for three years before his arrival in the province, whereupon a grievous famine fell upon the people and pitilessly destroyed them; insomuch that it is said that often forty or fifty men, wasted with hunger, would go together to some precipice, or to the sea-shore, and there, hand in hand, in piteous wise cast them themselves down either to perish by the fall, or be swallowed up by the waves. But on the very day on which the nation received the Baptism of the faith, there fell a soft but plentiful rain; the earth revived, the fields grew green again, and the season was pleasant and fruitful. Thus the old superstition was cast away, and idolatry renounced, the heart and flesh of all rejoiced in the

living God, for they perceived that He Who is the true God had enriched them by His heavenly grace with both inward and outward blessings. For the bishop, when he came into the province, and found so great misery from famine there, taught them to get their food by fishing; for their sea and rivers abounded in fish, but the people had no skill to take any of them, except eels alone. The bishop's men having gathered eel-nets everywhere, cast them into the sea, and by the blessing of God took three hundred fishes of divers sorts, which being divided into three parts, they gave a hundred to the poor, a hundred to those of whom they had the nets, and kept a hundred for their own use. By this benefit the bishop gained the affections of them all, and they began more readily at his preaching to hope for heavenly blessings, seeing that by his help they had received those which are temporal.

At this time, King Ethelwalch gave to the most reverend prelate, Wilfrid, land to the extent of eighty-seven families, to maintain his company who were wandering in exile. The place is called Selaeseu, that is, the Island of the Sea-Calf; it is encompassed by the sea on all sides, except the west, where is an entrance about the cast of a sling in width; which sort of place is by the Latins called a peninsula, by the Greeks, a cherronesos. Bishop Wilfrid, having this place given him, founded therein a monastery, chiefly of the brethren he had brought with him, and established a rule of life; and his successors are known to be there to this day. He himself, both in word and deed performed the duties of a bishop in those parts during the space of five years, until the death of King Egfrid, and was justly honoured by all. And forasmuch as the king, together with the said place, gave him all the goods that were therein, with the lands and men, he instructed all the people in the faith of Christ, and cleansed them in the water of Baptism. Among whom were two hundred and fifty bondsmen and bondswomen, all of whom he saved by Baptism from slavery to the Devil, and in like manner, by giving them their liberty, set them free from slavery to man.

Chap. XIV.

How a pestilence ceased through the intercession of King Oswald. [681-686 a.d.]

In this monastery, at that time, certain special manifestations of the heavenly grace are said to have been shown forth; in as much as the tyranny of the Devil had been recently cast out and Christ had begun to reign there. Of these I have thought it proper to perpetuate the memory of one which the most reverend Bishop Acca was wont often to relate to me, affirming that it had been told him by most creditable brothers of the same monastery. About the same time that this province had received the faith of Christ, a grievous pestilence fell upon many provinces of Britain; which, also, by the Divine dispensation, reached to the aforesaid monastery, then governed by the most religious priest of Christ, Eappa; and many, as well of those that had come thither with the bishop, as of those of the same province of the South Saxons who had been lately called to the faith, were snatched away out of this world. The brethren, therefore, thought fit to keep a fast of three days, and humbly to implore the Divine goodness to vouchsafe to have mercy on them, either by delivering from instant death those that were in danger by reason of the disease, or by saving those who were hurried out of this life from the eternal damnation of their souls.

There was at that time in the monastery, a little boy, of the Saxon nation, lately called to the faith, who had been attacked by the same infirmity, and had long kept his bed. On the second day of the aforesaid fasting and prayer, it happened about the second hour of the day, that this boy was left alone in the place where he lay sick, when on a sudden, through the Divine disposition, the most blessed chiefs of the Apostles vouchsafed to appear to him; for he was a boy of a very simple and gentle disposition, and with sincere devotion observed the mysteries of the faith which he had received. The Apostles therefore, greeting him with loving words, said, "My son, fear not death, concerning which thou art troubled; for this day we will bring thee to the kingdom of Heaven; but first thou must needs wait till the Masses are celebrated, that having received thy voyage provision, the Body and Blood of our Lord, and so being set free from sickness and death, thou mayest be taken up to the everlasting joys in Heaven.

"Call therefore to thee the priest, Eappa, and tell him, that the Lord has heard your prayers, and has favourably looked upon your devotion and your fast, and not one more shall die of this plague, either in the monastery or the lands adjacent to it; but all your people who any where labour under this sickness, shall be raised up from their weakness, and restored to their former health, saving thee alone, who art this day to be delivered from death, and to be carried into Heaven, to behold our Lord Christ, whom thou hast faithfully served. This favour the Divine mercy has vouchsafed to grant you, through

the intercession of the godly King Oswald, beloved of God, who formerly nobly ruled over the nation of the Northumbrians, with the authority of a temporal kingdom and the devotion of Christian piety which leads to the eternal kingdom. For this very day that king was killed in body by the infidels in war, and straightway taken up to Heaven to the everlasting joys of souls, and brought into fellowship with the number of the elect. Let them look in their records, wherein the burial of the dead is set down, and they will find that he was, this day, as we have said, taken out of this world. Let them, therefore, celebrate Masses in all the oratories of this monastery, either in thanksgiving because their prayers are heard, or else in memory of the aforesaid King Oswald, who once governed their nation, and therefore humbly prayed to the Lord for them, as for converts of his nation; and let all the brethren assemble in the church, and all communicate in the heavenly Sacrifices, and so let them cease to fast, and refresh the body also with the food that belongs to it."

The boy called the priest, and repeated all these words to him; and the priest carefully inquired after the habit and form of the men that had appeared to him. He answered, "Their habit was altogether noble, and their countenances most pleasant and beautiful, such as I had never seen before, nor did I think there could be any men so fair and comely. One of them indeed was shorn like a clerk, the other had a long beard; and they said that one of them was called Peter, the other Paul; and they were the servants of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, sent by Him from Heaven to protect our monastery." The priest believed what the boy said, and going thence immediately, looked in his chronicle, and found that King Oswald had been killed on that very day. He then called the brethren, ordered dinner to be provided, Masses to be said, and all of them to communicate as usual; causing also a part of the same Sacrifice of the Lord's Oblation to be carried to the sick boy.

Soon after this, the boy died, on that same day; and by his death proved that the words which he had heard from the Apostles of Christ were true. And this moreover bore witness to the truth of his words, that none besides himself, belonging to the same monastery, was taken away at that time. And without doubt, by this vision, many that heard of it were wonderfully excited to implore the Divine mercy in adversity, and to submit to the wholesome remedy of fasting. From that time, the day of commemoration of that king and soldier of Christ began to be yearly honoured with the celebration of Masses, not only in that monastery, but in many other places.

Chap. XV.

How King Caedwalla, king of the Gewissae, having slain Ethelwalch, wasted that Province with cruel slaughter and devastation. [685 a.d.]

In the meantime, Caedwalla, a young man of great vigour, of the royal race of the Gewissae, an exile from his country, came with an army, slew Ethelwalch, and wasted that province with cruel slaughter and devastation; but he was soon expelled by Berthun and Andhun, the king's ealdormen, who held in succession the government of the province. The first of them was afterwards killed by the same Caedwalla, when he was king of the Gewissae, and the province was reduced to more grievous slavery: Ini, likewise, who reigned after Caedwalla, oppressed that country with the like servitude for many years; for which reason, during all that time, they could have no bishop of their own; but their first bishop, Wilfrid, having been recalled home, they were subject to the bishop of the Gewissae, that is, the West Saxons, who were in the city of Venta.

Chap. XVI.

How the Isle of Wight received Christian inhabitants, and two royal youths of that island were killed immediately after Baptism. [686 a.d.]

After Caedwalla had obtained possession of the kingdom of the Gewissae, he took also the Isle of Wight, which till then was entirely given over to idolatry, and by merciless slaughter endeavoured to destroy all the inhabitants thereof, and to place in their stead people from his own province; binding himself by a vow, though it is said that he was not yet regenerated in Christ, to give the fourth part of the land and of the spoil to the Lord, if he took the island. He fulfilled this vow by giving the same for the service of the Lord to Bishop Wilfrid, who happened at the time to have come thither from his own people. The measure of that island, according to the computation of the English, is of twelve hundred families, wherefore an estate of three hundred families was given to the Bishop. The part which he received, he committed to one of his clerks called Bernwin, who was his sister's son, assigning to him a priest, whose name was Hiddila, to administer the Word and laver of life to all that would be saved.

Here I think it ought not to be omitted that, as the first fruits of those of that island who believed and were saved, two royal boys, brothers to Arwald, king of the island, were crowned with the special grace of God. For when the enemy approached, they made their escape out of the island, and crossed over into the neighbouring province of the Jutes. Coming to the place called At the Stone, they thought to be concealed from the victorious king, but they were betrayed and ordered to be killed. This being made known to a certain abbot and priest, whose name was Cynibert, who had a monastery not far from there, at a place called Hreutford, that is, the Ford of Reeds, he came to the king, who then lay in concealment in those parts to be cured of the wounds which he had received whilst he was fighting in the Isle of Wight, and begged of him, that if the boys must needs be killed, he might be allowed first to instruct them in the mysteries of the Christian faith. The king consented, and the bishop having taught them the Word of truth, and cleansed them in the font of salvation, assured to them their entrance into the kingdom of Heaven. Then the executioner came, and they joyfully underwent the temporal death, through which they did not doubt they were to pass to the life of the soul, which is everlasting. Thus, after this manner, when all the provinces of Britain had received the faith of Christ, the Isle of Wight also received the same; yet because it was suffering under the affliction of foreign subjection, no man there received the office or see of a bishop, before Daniel, who is now bishop of the West Saxons.

The island is situated opposite the borders of the South Saxons and the Gewissae, being separated from it by a sea, three miles wide, which is called

Solvente. In this sea, the two tides of the ocean, which break upon Britain all round its coasts from the boundless northern ocean, daily meet in conflict beyond the mouth of the river Homelea, which runs into the aforesaid sea, through the lands of the Jutes, belonging to the country of the Gewissae; and after this struggle of the tides, they fall back and return into the ocean whence they come.

Chap. XVII.

Of the Synod held in the plain of Haethfelth, Archbishop Theodore being president. [680 a.d.]

About this time, Theodore being informed that the faith of the Church at Constantinople was much perplexed by the heresy of Eutyches, and desiring that the Churches of the English, over which he presided, should remain free from all such taint, convened an assembly of venerable bishops and many learned men, and diligently inquired into the faith of each. He found them all of one mind in the Catholic faith, and this he caused to be committed to writing by the authority of the synod as a memorial, and for the instruction of succeeding generations; the beginning of which document is as follows:

“In the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, under the rule of our most pious lords, Egfrid, king of the Northumbrians, in the tenth year of his reign, the seventeenth of September, the eighth indiction; Ethelred, king of the Mercians, in the sixth year of his reign; Aldwulf king of the East Angles, in the seventeenth year of his reign; and Hlothere, king of Kent, in the seventh year of his reign; Theodore, by the grace of God, archbishop of the island of Britain, and of the city of Canterbury, being president, and the other venerable bishops of the island of Britain sitting with him, the holy Gospels being laid before them, at the place which, in the Saxon tongue, is called Haethfelth, we conferred together, and set forth the right and orthodox faith, as our Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh delivered the same to His disciples, who beheld His Presence and heard His words, and as it is delivered by the creed of the holy fathers, and by all holy and universal synods in general, and by the consent of all approved doctors of the Catholic Church. We, therefore, following them, in piety and orthodoxy, and professing accordance with their divinely inspired doctrine, do believe agreeably to it, and with the holy fathers confess the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost, to be properly and truly a Trinity consubstantial in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, that is, one God in three Subsistences or consubstantial persons, of equal glory and honour.”

And after much more of the same sort, appertaining to the confession of the right faith, this holy synod added to its document, “We acknowledge the five holy and general councils of the blessed fathers acceptable to God; that is, of the 318 assembled at Nicaea, against the most impious Arius and his tenets; and at Constantinople, of 150, against the madness of Macedonius and Eudoxius, and their tenets; and at Ephesus, for the first time, of 200, against the most wicked Nestorius, and his tenets; and at Chalcedon, of 630, against Eutyches and Nestorius, and their tenets; and again, at Constantinople, in a fifth council, in the time of Justinian the younger, against Theodorus, and the epistles of Theodoret and Ibas, and their tenets in opposition to Cyril.” And again a little lower, “the synod held in the city of Rome, in the time of the

blessed Pope Martin, in the eighth indiction, and in the ninth year of the most pious Emperor Constantine, we also acknowledge. And we glorify our Lord Jesus Christ, as they glorified Him, neither adding aught nor taking away; anathematizing with hearts and lips those whom they anathematized, and receiving those whom they received; glorifying God the Father, Who is without beginning, and His only-begotten Son, begotten of the Father before the worlds, and the Holy Ghost proceeding ineffably from the Father and the Son, even as those holy Apostles, prophets, and doctors, whom we have above-mentioned, did declare. And all we, who, with Archbishop Theodore, have thus set forth the Catholic faith, thereto subscribe.”

Chap. XVIII.

Of John, the precentor of the Apostolic see, who came into Britain to teach. [680 a.d.]

Among those who were present at this synod, and confirmed the decrees of the Catholic faith, was the venerable John, archchanter of the church of the holy Apostle Peter, and abbot of the monastery of the blessed Martin, who had come lately from Rome, by order of Pope Agatho, together with the most reverend Abbot Biscop, surnamed Benedict, of whom mention has been made above. For the said Benedict, having built a monastery in Britain, in honour of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, at the mouth of the river Wear, went to Rome with Ceolfrid, his companion and fellow-labourer in that work, who was after him abbot of the same monastery; he had been several times before at Rome, and was now honourably received by Pope Agatho of blessed memory; from whom he also asked and obtained, in order to secure the immunities of the monastery which he had founded, a letter of privilege confirmed by apostolic authority, according to what he knew to be the will and grant of King Egfrid, by whose consent and gift of land he had built that monastery.

He was also allowed to take the aforesaid Abbot John with him into Britain, that he might teach in his monastery the system of singing throughout the year, as it was practised at St. Peter's at Rome. The Abbot John did as he had been commanded by the Pope, teaching the singers of the said monastery the order and manner of singing and reading aloud, and committing to writing all that was requisite throughout the whole course of the year for the celebration of festivals; and these writings are still preserved in that monastery, and have been copied by many others elsewhere. The said John not only taught the brothers of that monastery, but such as had skill in singing resorted from almost all the monasteries of the same province to hear him, and many invited him to teach in other places.

Besides his task of singing and reading, he had also received a commission from the Apostolic Pope, carefully to inform himself concerning the faith of the English Church, and to give an account thereof on his return to Rome. For he also brought with him the decision of the synod of the blessed Pope Martin, held not long before at Rome, with the consent of one hundred and five bishops, chiefly to refute those who taught that there is but one operation and will in Christ, and he gave it to be transcribed in the aforesaid monastery of the most religious Abbot Benedict. The men who followed such opinion greatly perplexed the faith of the Church of Constantinople at that time; but by the help of God they were then discovered and overcome. Wherefore, Pope Agatho, being desirous to be informed concerning the state of the Church in Britain, as well as in other provinces, and to what extent it was clear from the

contagion of heretics, gave this matter in charge to the most reverend Abbot John, then appointed to go to Britain. The synod we have spoken of having been called for this purpose in Britain, the Catholic faith was found untainted in all, and a report of the proceedings of the same was given him to carry to Rome.

But in his return to his own country, soon after crossing the sea, he fell sick and died; and his body, for the sake of St. Martin, in whose monastery he presided, was by his friends carried to Tours, and honourably buried; for he had been kindly entertained by the Church there on his way to Britain, and earnestly entreated by the brethren, that in his return to Rome he would take that road, and visit their Church, and moreover he was there supplied with men to conduct him on his way, and assist him in the work enjoined upon him. Though he died by the way, yet the testimony of the Catholic faith of the English nation was carried to Rome, and received with great joy by the Apostolic Pope, and all those that heard or read it.

Chap. XIX.

How Queen Ethelthryth always preserved her virginity, and her body suffered no corruption in the grave. [660-696 a.d.]

King Egfrid took to wife Ethelthryth, the daughter of Anna, king of the East Angles, of whom mention has been often made; a man of true religion, and altogether noble in mind and deed. She had before been given in marriage to another, to wit, Tondbert, ealdorman of the Southern Gyrwas; but he died soon after he had married her, and she was given to the aforesaid king. Though she lived with him twelve years, yet she preserved the glory of perfect virginity, as I was informed by Bishop Wilfrid, of blessed memory, of whom I inquired, because some questioned the truth thereof; and he told me that he was an undoubted witness to her virginity, forasmuch as Egfrid promised to give him many lands and much money if he could persuade the queen to consent to fulfil her marriage duty, for he knew the queen loved no man more than himself. And it is not to be doubted that this might take place in our age, which true histories tell us happened sometimes in former ages, by the help of the same Lord who promises to abide with us always, even unto the end of the world. For the divine miracle whereby her flesh, being buried, could not suffer corruption, is a token that she had not been defiled by man.

She had long asked of the king that he would permit her to lay aside worldly cares, and to serve only Christ, the true King, in a monastery; and having at length with difficulty prevailed, she entered the monastery of the Abbess Aebba, who was aunt to King Egfrid, at the place called the city of Coludi, having received the veil of the religious habit from the hands of the aforesaid Bishop Wilfrid; but a year after she was herself made abbess in the district called Elge, where, having built a monastery, she began, by the example of a heavenly life and by her teaching, to be the virgin mother of many virgins dedicated to God. It is told of her that from the time of her entering the monastery, she would never wear any linen but only woollen garments, and would seldom wash in a hot bath, unless just before the greater festivals, as Easter, Whitsuntide, and the Epiphany, and then she did it last of all, when the other handmaids of Christ who were there had been washed, served by her and her attendants. She seldom ate more than once a day, excepting on the greater festivals, or some urgent occasion. Always, except when grievous sickness prevented her, from the time of matins till day-break, she continued in the church at prayer. Some also say, that by the spirit of prophecy she not only foretold the pestilence of which she was to die, but also, in the presence of all, revealed the number of those that should be then snatched away from this world out of her monastery. She was taken to the Lord, in the midst of her flock, seven years after she had been made abbess; and, as she had ordered, was buried among them in a wooden coffin in her

turn, according to the order in which she had passed away.

She was succeeded in the office of abbess by her sister Sexburg, who had been wife to Earconbert, king of Kent. This abbess, when her sister had been buried sixteen years, thought fit to take up her bones, and, putting them into a new coffin, to translate them into the church. Accordingly she ordered some of the brothers to find a stone whereof to make a coffin for this purpose. They went on board ship, for the district of Ely is on every side encompassed with water and marshes, and has no large stones, and came to a small deserted city, not far from thence, which, in the language of the English, is called Grantacaestir, and presently, near the city walls, they found a white marble coffin, most beautifully wrought, and fitly covered with a lid of the same sort of stone. Perceiving, therefore, that the Lord had prospered their journey, they returned thanks to Him and carried it to the monastery.

When the grave was opened and the body of the holy virgin and bride of Christ was brought into the light of day, it was found as free from corruption as if she had died and been buried on that very day; as the aforesaid Bishop Wilfrid, and many others that know it, testify. But the physician, Cynifrid, who was present at her death, and when she was taken up out of the grave, had more certain knowledge. He was wont to relate that in her sickness she had a very great tumour under her jaw. "And I was ordered," said he, "to lay open that tumour to let out the noxious matter in it, which I did, and she seemed to be somewhat more easy for two days, so that many thought she might recover from her infirmity; but on the third day she was attacked by the former pains, and being soon snatched out of the world, she exchanged all pain and death for everlasting life and health. And when, so many years after, her bones were to be taken out of the grave, a pavilion being spread over it, and all the congregation, the brothers on the one side, and the sisters on the other, standing about it singing, while the abbess, with a few others, had gone within to take up and wash the bones, on a sudden we heard the abbess within cry out with a loud voice, 'Glory be to the name of the Lord.' Not long after they called me in, opening the door of the pavilion, and I found the body of the holy virgin taken out of the grave and laid on a bed, like one asleep; then taking off the veil from the face, they also showed me that the incision which I had made was healed up; so that, in marvellous wise, instead of the open gaping wound with which she had been buried, there then appeared only the slightest trace of a scar. Besides, all the linen clothes in which the body had been wrapped, appeared entire and as fresh as if they had been that very day put about her chaste limbs."

It is said that when she was sore troubled with the aforesaid tumour and pain in her jaw and neck, she took great pleasure in that sort of sickness, and was wont to say, "I know of a surety that I deservedly bear the weight of my trouble on my neck, for I remember that, when I was a young maiden, I bore on it the needless weight of necklaces; and therefore I believe the Divine goodness would have me endure the pain in my neck, that so I may be

absolved from the guilt of my needless levity, having now, instead of gold and pearls, the fiery heat of a tumour rising on my neck." It happened also that by the touch of those same linen clothes devils were expelled from bodies possessed, and other diseases were at divers times healed; and the coffin wherein she was first buried is said to have cured some of infirmities of the eyes, who, praying with their heads resting upon that coffin, were presently relieved of the pain or dimness in their eyes. So they washed the virgin's body, and having clothed it in new garments, brought it into the church, and laid it in the sarcophagus that had been brought, where it is held in great veneration to this day. The sarcophagus was found in a wonderful manner to fit the virgin's body as if it had been made purposely for her, and the place for the head, which was fashioned separately, appeared exactly shaped to the measurement of her head.

Elge is in the province of the East Angles, a district of about six hundred families, of the nature of an island, encompassed, as has been said, with marshes or waters, and therefore it has its name from the great plenty of eels taken in those marshes; there the aforesaid handmaid of Christ desired to have a monastery, because, as we have before mentioned, she came, according to the flesh, of that same province of the East Angles.

Chap. XX.

A Hymn concerning her.

It seems fitting to insert in this history a hymn concerning virginity, which we composed in elegiac verse many years ago, in praise and honour of the same queen and bride of Christ, and therefore truly a queen, because the bride of Christ; and to imitate the method of Holy Scripture, wherein many songs are inserted in the history, and these, as is well known, are composed in metre and verse.

“Trinity, Gracious, Divine, Who rulest all the ages; favour my task, Trinity, Gracious, Divine.

“Let Maro sound the trumpet of war, let us sing the gifts of peace; the gifts of Christ we sing, let Maro sound the trumpet of war.

“Chaste is my song, no rape of guilty Helen; light tales shall be told by the wanton, chaste is my song.

“I will tell of gifts from Heaven, not wars of hapless Troy; I will tell of gifts from Heaven, wherein the earth is glad.

“Lo! the high God comes to the womb of a holy virgin, to be the Saviour of men, lo! the high God comes.

“A hallowed maid gives birth to Him Who gave the world its being; Mary, the gate of God, a maiden gives Him birth.

“The company of her fellows rejoices over the Virgin Mother of Him Who wields the thunder; a shining virgin band, the company of her fellows rejoices.

“Her honour has made many a blossom to spring from that pure shoot, virgin blossoms her honour has made to spring.

“Scorched by the fierce flames, the maiden Agatha yielded not; in like manner Eulalia endures, scorched by the fierce flames.

“The lofty soul of chaste Tecla overcomes the wild beasts; chaste Euphemia overcomes the accursed wild beasts.

“Agnes joyously laughs at the sword, herself stronger than steel, Cecilia joyously laughs at the foemen’s sword.

“Many a triumph is mighty throughout the world in temperate hearts; throughout the world love of the temperate life is mighty.

“Yea, and our day likewise a peerless maiden has blessed; peerless our Ethelthryth shines.

“Child of a noble sire, and glorious by royal birth, more noble in her Lord’s sight, the child of a noble sire.

“Thence she receives queenly honour and a sceptre in this world; thence she receives honour, awaiting higher honour above.

“What need, gracious lady, to seek an earthly lord, even now given to the Heavenly Bridegroom?

“Christ is at hand, the Bridegroom (why seek an earthly lord?) that thou mayst follow even now, methinks, in the steps of the Mother of Heaven’s King, that thou too mayst be a mother in God.

“Twelve years she had reigned, a bride dedicated to God, then in the cloister dwelt, a bride dedicated to God.

“To Heaven all consecrated she lived, abounding in lofty deeds, then to Heaven all consecrated she gave up her soul.

“Twice eight Novembers the maid’s fair flesh lay in the tomb, nor did the maid’s fair flesh see corruption in the tomb.

“This was Thy work, O Christ, that her very garments were bright and undefiled even in the grave; O Christ, this was Thy work.

“The dark serpent flies before the honour due to the holy raiment; disease is driven away, and the dark serpent flies.

“Rage fills the foe who of old conquered Eve; exultant the maiden triumphs and rage fills the foe.

“Behold, O bride of God, thy glory upon earth; the glory that awaits thee in the Heavens behold, O bride of God.

“In gladness thou receivest gifts, bright amidst the festal torches; behold! the Bridegroom comes, in gladness thou receivest gifts.

“And a new song thou singest to the tuneful harp; a new-made bride, thou exuldest in the tuneful hymn.

“None can part her from them which follow the Lamb enthroned on high, whom none had severed from the Love enthroned on high.”

Chap. XXI.

How Bishop Theodore made peace between the kings Egfrid and Ethelred. [679 a.d.]

In the ninth year of the reign of King Egfrid, a great battle was fought between him and Ethelred, king of the Mercians, near the river Trent, and Aelfwine, brother to King Egfrid, was slain, a youth about eighteen years of age, and much beloved by both provinces; for King Ethelred had married his sister Osthryth. There was now reason to expect a more bloody war, and more lasting enmity between those kings and their fierce nations; but Theodore, the bishop, beloved of God, relying on the Divine aid, by his wholesome admonitions wholly extinguished the dangerous fire that was breaking out; so that the kings and their people on both sides were appeased, and no man was put to death, but only the due mulct paid to the king who was the avenger for the death of his brother; and this peace continued long after between those kings and between their kingdoms.

Chap. XXII.

How a certain captive's chains fell off when Masses were sung for him. [679
a.d.]

In the aforesaid battle, wherein King Aelfwine was killed, a memorable incident is known to have happened, which I think ought by no means to be passed over in silence; for the story will be profitable to the salvation of many. In that battle a youth called Imma, one of the king's thegns, was struck down, and having lain as if dead all that day and the next night among the bodies of the slain, at length he came to himself and revived, and sitting up, bound his own wounds as best as he could. Then having rested awhile, he stood up, and went away to see if he could find any friends to take care of him; but in so doing he was discovered and taken by some of the enemy's army, and carried before their lord, who was one of King Ethelred's nobles. Being asked by him who he was, and fearing to own himself a thegn, he answered that he was a peasant, a poor man and married, and he declared that he had come to the war with others like himself to bring provisions to the army. The noble entertained him, and ordered his wounds to be dressed, and when he began to recover, to prevent his escaping, he ordered him to be bound at night. But he could not be bound, for as soon as they that bound him were gone, his bonds were loosed.

Now he had a brother called Tunna, who was a priest and abbot of a monastery in the city which is still called Tunnacaestir after him. This man, hearing that his brother had been killed in the battle, went to see if haply he could find his body; and finding another very like him in all respects, he believed it to be his. So he carried it to his monastery, and buried it honourably, and took care often to say Masses for the absolution of his soul; the celebration whereof occasioned what I have said, that none could bind him but he was presently loosed again. In the meantime, the noble that had kept him was amazed, and began to inquire why he could not be bound; whether perchance he had any spells about him, such as are spoken of in stories. He answered that he knew nothing of those arts; "but I have," said he, "a brother who is a priest in my country, and I know that he, supposing me to be killed, is saying frequent Masses for me; and if I were now in the other life, my soul there, through his intercession, would be delivered from penalty."

When he had been a prisoner with the noble some time, those who attentively observed him, by his countenance, habit, and discourse, took notice, that he was not of the meaner sort, as he had said, but of some quality. The noble then privately sending for him, straitly questioned him, whence he came, promising to do him no harm on that account if he would frankly confess who he was. This he did, declaring that he had been a thegn of the king's, and the noble answered, "I perceived by all your answers that you were no peasant. And now you deserve to die, because all my brothers and relations were killed in that fight; yet I will not put you to death, that I may

not break my promise.”

As soon, therefore, as he was recovered, he sold him to a certain Frisian at London, but he could not in any wise be bound either by him, or as he was being led thither. But when his enemies had put all manner of bonds on him, and the buyer perceived that he could in no way be bound, he gave him leave to ransom himself if he could. Now it was at the third hour, when the Masses were wont to be said, that his bonds were most frequently loosed. He, having taken an oath that he would either return, or send his owner the money for the ransom, went into Kent to King Hlothere, who was son to the sister of Queen Ethelthryth, above spoken of, for he had once been that queen’s thegn. From him he asked and obtained the price of his freedom, and as he had promised, sent it to his master for his ransom.

Returning afterwards into his own country, and coming to his brother, he gave him an exact account of all his misfortunes, and the consolation afforded to him in them; and from what his brother told him he understood, that his bonds had been generally loosed at those times when Masses had been celebrated for him; and he perceived that other advantages and blessings which had fallen to his lot in his time of danger, had been conferred on him from Heaven, through the intercession of his brother, and the Oblation of the saving Sacrifice. Many, on hearing this account from the aforesaid man, were stirred up in faith and pious devotion to prayer, or to alms-giving, or to make an offering to God of the Sacrifice of the holy Oblation, for the deliverance of their friends who had departed this world; for they knew that such saving Sacrifice availed for the eternal redemption both of body and soul. This story was also told me by some of those who had heard it related by the man himself to whom it happened; therefore, since I had a clear understanding of it, I have not hesitated to insert it in my Ecclesiastical History.

Chap. XXIII.

Of the life and death of the Abbess Hilda. [614-680 a.d.]

In the year after this, that is the year of our Lord 680, the most religious handmaid of Christ, Hilda, abbess of the monastery that is called Streanaeshalch, as we mentioned above, after having done many heavenly deeds on earth, passed thence to receive the rewards of the heavenly life, on the 17th of November, at the age of sixty-six years. Her life falls into two equal parts, for the first thirty-three years of it she spent living most nobly in the secular habit; and still more nobly dedicated the remaining half to the Lord in the monastic life. For she was nobly born, being the daughter of Hereric, nephew to King Edwin, and with that king she also received the faith and mysteries of Christ, at the preaching of Paulinus, of blessed memory, the first bishop of the Northumbrians, and preserved the same undefiled till she attained to the vision of our Lord in Heaven.

When she had resolved to quit the secular habit, and to serve Him alone, she withdrew into the province of the East Angles, for she was allied to the king there; being desirous to cross over thence into Gaul, forsaking her native country and all that she had, and so to live a stranger for our Lord's sake in the monastery of Cale, that she might the better attain to the eternal country in heaven. For her sister Heresuid, mother to Aldwulf, king of the East Angles, was at that time living in the same monastery, under regular discipline, waiting for an everlasting crown; and led by her example, she continued a whole year in the aforesaid province, with the design of going abroad; but afterwards, Bishop Aidan recalled her to her home, and she received land to the extent of one family on the north side of the river Wear; where likewise for a year she led a monastic life, with very few companions.

After this she was made abbess in the monastery called Heruteu, which monastery had been founded, not long before, by the pious handmaid of Christ, Heiu, who is said to have been the first woman in the province of the Northumbrians who took upon her the vows and habit of a nun, being consecrated by Bishop Aidan; but she, soon after she had founded that monastery, retired to the city of Calcaria, which is called Kaelcacaestir by the English, and there fixed her dwelling. Hilda, the handmaid of Christ, being set over that monastery, began immediately to order it in all things under a rule of life, according as she had been instructed by learned men; for Bishop Aidan, and others of the religious that knew her, frequently visited her and loved her heartily, and diligently instructed her, because of her innate wisdom and love of the service of God.

When she had for some years governed this monastery, wholly intent upon establishing a rule of life, it happened that she also undertook either to build or to set in order a monastery in the place called Streanaeshalch, and this work

which was laid upon her she industriously performed; for she put this monastery under the same rule of monastic life as the former; and taught there the strict observance of justice, piety, chastity, and other virtues, and particularly of peace and charity; so that, after the example of the primitive Church, no one there was rich, and none poor, for they had all things common, and none had any private property. Her prudence was so great, that not only meaner men in their need, but sometimes even kings and princes, sought and received her counsel; she obliged those who were under her direction to give so much time to reading of the Holy Scriptures, and to exercise themselves so much in works of justice, that many might readily be found there fit for the priesthood and the service of the altar.

Indeed we have seen five from that monastery who afterwards became bishops, and all of them men of singular merit and sanctity, whose names were Bosa, Aetla, Otffor, John, and Wilfrid. Of the first we have said above that he was consecrated bishop of York; of the second, it may be briefly stated that he was appointed bishop of Dorchester. Of the last two we shall tell hereafter, that the former was ordained bishop of Hagustald, the other of the church of York; of the third, we may here mention that, having applied himself to the reading and observance of the Scriptures in both the monasteries of the Abbess Hilda, at length being desirous to attain to greater perfection, he went into Kent, to Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory; where having spent some time in sacred studies, he resolved to go to Rome also, which, in those days, was esteemed a very salutary undertaking. Returning thence into Britain, he took his way into the province of the Hwiccas, where King Osric then ruled, and continued there a long time, preaching the Word of faith, and showing an example of good life to all that saw and heard him. At that time, Bosel, the bishop of that province, laboured under such weakness of body, that he could not himself perform episcopal functions; for which reason, Otffor was, by universal consent, chosen bishop in his stead, and by order of King Ethelred, consecrated by Bishop Wilfrid, of blessed memory, who was then Bishop of the Midland Angles, because Archbishop Theodore was dead, and no other bishop ordained in his place. A little while before, that is, before the election of the aforesaid man of God, Bosel, Tatfrid, a man of great industry and learning, and of excellent ability, had been chosen bishop for that province, from the monastery of the same abbess, but had been snatched away by an untimely death, before he could be ordained.

Thus this handmaid of Christ, the Abbess Hilda, whom all that knew her called Mother, for her singular piety and grace, was not only an example of good life, to those that lived in her monastery, but afforded occasion of amendment and salvation to many who lived at a distance, to whom the blessed fame was brought of her industry and virtue. For it was meet that the dream of her mother, Bregusuid, during her infancy, should be fulfilled. Now Bregusuid, at the time that her husband, Hereric, lived in banishment, under

Cerdic, king of the Britons, where he was also poisoned, fancied, in a dream, that he was suddenly taken away from her and she was seeking for him most carefully, but could find no sign of him anywhere. After an anxious search for him, all at once she found a most precious necklace under her garment, and whilst she was looking on it very attentively, it seemed to shine forth with such a blaze of light that it filled all Britain with the glory of its brilliance. This dream was doubtless fulfilled in her daughter that we speak of, whose life was an example of the works of light, not only blessed to herself, but to many who desired to live aright.

When she had governed this monastery many years, it pleased Him Who has made such merciful provision for our salvation, to give her holy soul the trial of a long infirmity of the flesh, to the end that, according to the Apostle's example, her virtue might be made perfect in weakness. Struck down with a fever, she suffered from a burning heat, and was afflicted with the same trouble for six years continually; during all which time she never failed either to return thanks to her Maker, or publicly and privately to instruct the flock committed to her charge; for taught by her own experience she admonished all men to serve the Lord dutifully, when health of body is granted to them, and always to return thanks faithfully to Him in adversity, or bodily infirmity. In the seventh year of her sickness, when the disease turned inwards, her last day came, and about cockcrow, having received the voyage provision of Holy Housel, and called together the handmaids of Christ that were within the same monastery, she admonished them to preserve the peace of the Gospel among themselves, and with all others; and even as she spoke her words of exhortation, she joyfully saw death come, or, in the words of our Lord, passed from death unto life.

That same night it pleased Almighty God, by a manifest vision, to make known her death in another monastery, at a distance from hers, which she had built that same year, and which is called Hacanós. There was in that monastery, a certain nun called Begu, who, having dedicated her virginity to the Lord, had served Him upwards of thirty years in the monastic life. This nun was resting in the dormitory of the sisters, when on a sudden she heard in the air the well-known sound of the bell, which used to awake and call them to prayers, when any one of them was taken out of this world, and opening her eyes, as she thought, she saw the roof of the house open, and a light shed from above filling all the place. Looking earnestly upon that light, she saw the soul of the aforesaid handmaid of God in that same light, being carried to heaven attended and guided by angels. Then awaking, and seeing the other sisters lying round about her, she perceived that what she had seen had been revealed to her either in a dream or a vision; and rising immediately in great fear, she ran to the virgin who then presided in the monastery in the place of the abbess, and whose name was Frigyth, and, with many tears and lamentations, and heaving deep sighs, told her that the Abbess Hilda, mother of them all, had departed this life, and had in her sight ascended to the gates of eternal

light, and to the company of the citizens of heaven, with a great light, and with angels for her guides. Frigyth having heard it, awoke all the sisters, and calling them to the church, admonished them to give themselves to prayer and singing of psalms, for the soul of their mother; which they did earnestly during the remainder of the night; and at break of day, the brothers came with news of her death, from the place where she had died. They answered that they knew it before, and then related in order how and when they had learnt it, by which it appeared that her death had been revealed to them in a vision that same hour in which the brothers said that she had died. Thus by a fair harmony of events Heaven ordained, that when some saw her departure out of this world, the others should have knowledge of her entrance into the eternal life of souls. These monasteries are about thirteen miles distant from each other.

It is also told, that her death was, in a vision, made known the same night to one of the virgins dedicated to God, who loved her with a great love, in the same monastery where the said handmaid of God died. This nun saw her soul ascend to heaven in the company of angels; and this she openly declared, in the very same hour that it happened, to those handmaids of Christ that were with her; and aroused them to pray for her soul, even before the rest of the community had heard of her death. The truth of which was known to the whole community in the morning. This same nun was at that time with some other handmaids of Christ, in the remotest part of the monastery, where the women who had lately entered the monastic life were wont to pass their time of probation, till they were instructed according to rule, and admitted into the fellowship of the community.

Chap. XXIV.

That there was in her monastery a brother, on whom the gift of song was bestowed by Heaven.[680 a.d.]

There was in the monastery of this abbess a certain brother, marked in a special manner by the grace of God, for he was wont to make songs of piety and religion, so that whatever was expounded to him out of Scripture, he turned ere long into verse expressive of much sweetness and penitence, in English, which was his native language. By his songs the minds of many were often fired with contempt of the world, and desire of the heavenly life. Others of the English nation after him attempted to compose religious poems, but none could equal him, for he did not learn the art of poetry from men, neither was he taught by man, but by God's grace he received the free gift of song, for which reason he never could compose any trivial or vain poem, but only those which concern religion it behoved his religious tongue to utter. For having lived in the secular habit till he was well advanced in years, he had never learned anything of versifying; and for this reason sometimes at a banquet, when it was agreed to make merry by singing in turn, if he saw the harp come towards him, he would rise up from table and go out and return home.

Once having done so and gone out of the house where the banquet was, to the stable, where he had to take care of the cattle that night, he there composed himself to rest at the proper time. Thereupon one stood by him in his sleep, and saluting him, and calling him by his name, said, "Cædmon, sing me something." But he answered, "I cannot sing, and for this cause I left the banquet and retired hither, because I could not sing." Then he who talked to him replied, "Nevertheless thou must needs sing to me." "What must I sing?" he asked. "Sing the beginning of creation," said the other. Having received this answer he straightway began to sing verses to the praise of God the Creator, which he had never heard, the purport whereof was after this manner: "Now must we praise the Maker of the heavenly kingdom, the power of the Creator and His counsel, the deeds of the Father of glory. How He, being the eternal God, became the Author of all wondrous works, Who being the Almighty Guardian of the human race, first created heaven for the sons of men to be the covering of their dwelling place, and next the earth." This is the sense but not the order of the words as he sang them in his sleep; for verses, though never so well composed, cannot be literally translated out of one language into another without loss of their beauty and loftiness. Awaking from his sleep, he remembered all that he had sung in his dream, and soon added more after the same manner, in words which worthily expressed the praise of God.

In the morning he came to the reeve who was over him, and having told him of the gift he had received, was conducted to the abbess, and bidden, in the presence of many learned men, to tell his dream, and repeat the verses, that they might all examine and give their judgement upon the nature and origin of the gift whereof he spoke. And they all judged that heavenly grace had been granted to him by the Lord. They expounded to him a passage of sacred history or doctrine, enjoining upon him, if he could, to put it into verse. Having undertaken this task, he went away, and returning the next morning, gave them the passage he had been bidden to translate, rendered in most excellent verse. Whereupon the abbess, joyfully recognizing the grace of God in the man, instructed him to quit the secular habit, and take upon him monastic vows; and having received him into the monastery, she and all her people admitted him to the company of the brethren, and ordered that he should be taught the whole course of sacred history. So he, giving ear to all that he could learn, and bearing it in mind, and as it were ruminating, like a clean animal, turned it into most harmonious verse; and sweetly singing it, made his masters in their turn his hearers. He sang the creation of the world, the origin of man, and all the history of Genesis, the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, their entrance into the promised land, and many other histories from Holy Scripture; the Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection of our Lord, and His Ascension into heaven; the coming of the Holy Ghost, and the teaching of the Apostles; likewise he made many songs concerning the terror of future judgement, the horror of the pains of hell, and the joys of heaven; besides many more about the blessings and the judgements of God, by all of which he endeavoured to draw men away from the love of sin, and to excite in them devotion to well-doing and perseverance therein. For he was a very religious man, humbly submissive to the discipline of monastic rule, but inflamed with fervent zeal against those who chose to do otherwise; for which reason he made a fair ending of his life.

For when the hour of his departure drew near, it was preceded by a bodily infirmity under which he laboured for the space of fourteen days, yet it was of so mild a nature that he could talk and go about the whole time. In his neighbourhood was the house to which those that were sick, and like to die, were wont to be carried. He desired the person that ministered to him, as the evening came on of the night in which he was to depart this life, to make ready a place there for him to take his rest. The man, wondering why he should desire it, because there was as yet no sign of his approaching death, nevertheless did his bidding. When they had lain down there, and had been conversing happily and pleasantly for some time with those that were in the house before, and it was now past midnight, he asked them, whether they had the Eucharist within? They answered, "What need of the Eucharist? for you are not yet appointed to die, since you talk so merrily with us, as if you were in good health." "Nevertheless," said he, "bring me the Eucharist." Having received It into his hand, he asked, whether they were all in charity with him,

and had no complaint against him, nor any quarrel or grudge. They answered, that they were all in perfect charity with him, and free from all anger; and in their turn they asked him to be of the same mind towards them. He answered at once, "I am in charity, my children, with all the servants of God." Then strengthening himself with the heavenly Viaticum, he prepared for the entrance into another life, and asked how near the time was when the brothers should be awakened to sing the nightly praises of the Lord? They answered, "It is not far off." Then he said, "It is well, let us await that hour;" and signing himself with the sign of the Holy Cross, he laid his head on the pillow, and falling into a slumber for a little while, so ended his life in silence.

Thus it came to pass, that as he had served the Lord with a simple and pure mind, and quiet devotion, so he now departed to behold His Presence, leaving the world by a quiet death; and that tongue, which had uttered so many wholesome words in praise of the Creator, spake its last words also in His praise, while he signed himself with the Cross, and commended his spirit into His hands; and by what has been here said, he seems to have had foreknowledge of his death.

Chap. XXV.

Of the vision that appeared to a certain man of God before the monastery of the city Coludi was burned down.

At this time, the monastery of virgins, called the city of Coludi, above-mentioned, was burned down, through carelessness; and yet all that knew it might have been aware that it happened by reason of the wickedness of those who dwelt in it, and chiefly of those who seemed to be the greatest. But there wanted not a warning of the approaching punishment from the Divine mercy whereby they might have been led to amend their ways, and by fasting and tears and prayers, like the Ninevites, have averted the anger of the just Judge.

For there was in that monastery a man of the Scottish race, called Adamnan, leading a life entirely devoted to God in continence and prayer, insomuch that he never took any food or drink, except only on Sundays and Thursdays; and often spent whole nights in watching and prayer. This strictness in austerity of life he had first adopted from the necessity of correcting the evil that was in him; but in process of time the necessity became a custom.

For in his youth he had been guilty of some sin for which, when he came to himself, he conceived a great horror, and dreaded lest he should be punished for the same by the righteous Judge. Betaking himself, therefore, to a priest, who, he hoped, might show him the way of salvation, he confessed his guilt, and desired to be advised how he might escape the wrath to come. The priest having heard his offence, said, "A great wound requires greater care in the healing thereof; wherefore give yourself as far as you are able to fasting and psalms, and prayer, to the end that thus coming before the presence of the Lord in confession," you may find Him merciful. But he, being oppressed with great grief by reason of his guilty conscience, and desiring to be the sooner loosed from the inward fetters of sin, which lay heavy upon him, answered, "I am still young in years and strong of body, and shall, therefore, easily bear all whatsoever you shall enjoin me to do, if so be that I may be saved in the day of the Lord, even though you should bid me spend the whole night standing in prayer, and pass the whole week in abstinence." The priest replied, "It is much for you to continue for a whole week without bodily sustenance; it is enough to observe a fast for two or three days; do this till I come again to you in a short time, when I will more fully show you what you ought to do, and how long to persevere in your penance." Having so said, and prescribed the measure of his penance, the priest went away, and upon some sudden occasion passed over into Ireland, which was his native country, and returned no more to him, as he had appointed. But the man remembering this injunction and his own promise, gave himself up entirely to tears of penitence, holy vigils and continence; so that he only took food on Thursdays and

Sundays, as has been said; and continued fasting all the other days of the week. When he heard that his priest had gone to Ireland, and had died there, he ever after observed this manner of abstinence, which had been appointed for him as we have said; and as he had begun that course through the fear of God, in penitence for his guilt, so he still continued the same unremittingly for the love of God, and through delight in its rewards.

Having practised this carefully for a long time, it happened that he had gone on a certain day to a distance from the monastery, accompanied by one the brothers; and as they were returning from this journey, when they drew near to the monastery, and beheld its lofty buildings, the man of God burst into tears, and his countenance discovered the trouble of his heart. His companion, perceiving it, asked what was the reason, to which he answered: "The time is at hand when a devouring fire shall reduce to ashes all the buildings which you here behold, both public and private." The other, hearing these words, when they presently came into the monastery, told them to Aebba, the mother of the community. She with good cause being much troubled at that prediction, called the man to her, and straitly questioned him concerning the matter and how he came to know it. He answered, "Being engaged one night lately in watching and singing psalms, on a sudden I saw one standing by me whose countenance I did not know, and I was startled at his presence, but he bade me not to fear, and speaking to me like a friend he said, 'You do well in that you have chosen rather at this time of rest not to give yourself up to sleep, but to continue in watching and prayer.' I answered, 'I know I have great need to continue in wholesome watching and earnest prayer to the Lord to pardon my transgressions.' He replied, 'You speak truly, for you and many more have need to redeem their sins by good works, and when they cease from temporal labours, then to labour the more eagerly for desire of eternal blessings; but this very few do; for I, having now gone through all this monastery in order, have looked into the huts and beds of all, and found none of them except yourself busy about the health of his soul; but all of them, both men and women, are either sunk in slothful sleep, or are awake in order to commit sin; for even the cells that were built for prayer or reading, are now converted into places of feasting, drinking, talking, and other delights; the very virgins dedicated to God, laying aside the respect due to their profession, whensoever they are at leisure, apply themselves to weaving fine garments, wherewith to adorn themselves like brides, to the danger of their state, or to gain the friendship of strange men; for which reason, as is meet, a heavy judgement from Heaven with raging fire is ready to fall on this place and those that dwell therein.'" The abbess said, "Why did you not sooner reveal to me what you knew?" He answered, "I was afraid to do it, out of respect to you, lest you should be too much afflicted; yet you may have this comfort, that the blow will not fall in your days." This vision being made known, the inhabitants of that place were for a few days in some little fear, and leaving off their sins, began to do penance; but after the death of the

abbes they returned to their former defilement, nay, they committed worse sins; and when they said "Peace and safety," the doom of the aforesaid judgement came suddenly upon them.

That all this fell out after this manner, was told me by my most reverend fellow-priest, Aedgils, who then lived in that monastery. Afterwards, when many of the inhabitants had departed thence, on account of the destruction, he lived a long time in our monastery, and died there. We have thought fit to insert this in our History, to admonish the reader of the works of the Lord, how terrible He is in His doing toward the children of men, lest haply we should at some time or other yield to the snares of the flesh, and dreading too little the judgement of God, fall under His sudden wrath, and either in His righteous anger be brought low with temporal losses, or else be more strictly tried and snatched away to eternal perdition.

Chap. XXVI.

Of the death of the Kings Egfrid and Hlothere. [684-685 a.d.]

In the year of our Lord 684, Egfrid, king of the Northumbrians, sending his general, Berct, with an army into Ireland, miserably laid waste that unoffending nation, which had always been most friendly to the English; insomuch that the invading force spared not even the churches or monasteries. But the islanders, while to the utmost of their power they repelled force with force, implored the assistance of the Divine mercy, and with constant imprecations invoked the vengeance of Heaven; and though such a curse cannot inherit the kingdom of God, yet it was believed, that those who were justly cursed on account of their impiety, soon suffered the penalty of their guilt at the avenging hand of God. For the very next year, when that same king had rashly led his army to ravage the province of the Picts, greatly against the advice of his friends, and particularly of Cuthbert, of blessed memory, who had been lately ordained bishop, the enemy made a feigned retreat, and the king was drawn into a narrow pass among remote mountains, and slain, with the greater part of the forces he had led thither, on the 20th of May, in the fortieth year of his age, and the fifteenth of his reign. His friends, as has been said, advised him not to engage in this war; but since he had the year before refused to listen to the most reverend father, Egbert, advising him not to attack the Scots, who were doing him no harm, it was laid upon him as a punishment for his sin, that he should now not listen to those who would have prevented his death.

From that time the hopes and strength of the Anglian kingdom “began to ebb and fall away;” for the Picts recovered their own lands, which had been held by the English, and so did also the Scots that were in Britain; and some of the Britons regained their liberty, which they have now enjoyed for about forty-six years. Among the many English that then either fell by the sword, or were made slaves, or escaped by flight out of the country of the Picts, the most reverend man of God, Trumwine, who had been made bishop over them, withdrew with his people that were in the monastery of Aebbercurnig, in the country of the English, but close by the arm of the sea which is the boundary between the lands of the English and the Picts. Having commended his followers, wheresoever he could, to his friends in the monasteries, he chose his own place of abode in the monastery, which we have so often mentioned, of servants and handmaids of God, at Streanaeshalh; and there for many years, with a few of his own brethren, he led a life in all monastic austerity, not only to his own benefit, but to the benefit of many others, and dying there, he was buried in the church of the blessed Peter the Apostle, with the honour due to his life and rank. The royal virgin, Elfled, with her mother, Eanfled, whom we have mentioned before, then presided over that monastery; but

when the bishop came thither, that devout teacher found in him the greatest help in governing, and comfort in her private life. Aldfrid succeeded Egfrid in the throne, being a man most learned in the Scriptures, said to be brother to Egfrid, and son to King Oswy; he nobly retrieved the ruined state of the kingdom, though within narrower bounds.

The same year, being the 685th from the Incarnation of our Lord, Hlothere, king of Kent, died on the 6th of February, when he had reigned twelve years after his brother Egbert, who had reigned nine years: he was wounded in battle with the South Saxons, whom Edric, the son of Egbert, had raised against him, and died whilst his wound was being dressed. After him, this same Edric reigned a year and a half. On his death, kings of doubtful title, or of foreign origin, for some time wasted the kingdom, till the lawful king, Wictred, the son of Egbert, being settled in the throne, by his piety and zeal delivered his nation from foreign invasion.

Chap. XXVII.

How Cuthbert, a man of God, was made bishop; and how he lived and taught whilst still in the monastic life. [685 a.d.]

In the same year in which King Egfrid departed this life, he, as has been said, caused the holy and venerable Cuthbert to be ordained bishop of the church of Lindisfarne. He had for many years led a solitary life, in great continence of body and mind, in a very small island, called Farne, in the ocean about nine miles distant from that same church. From his earliest childhood he had always been inflamed with the desire of a religious life; and he adopted the name and habit of a monk when he was quite a young man: he first entered the monastery of Mailros, which is on the bank of the river Tweed, and was then governed by the Abbot Eata, a man of great gentleness and simplicity, who was afterward made bishop of the church of Hagustald or Lindisfarne, as has been said above. The provost of the monastery at that time was Boisil, a priest of great virtue and of a prophetic spirit. Cuthbert, humbly submitting himself to this man's direction, from him received both a knowledge of the Scriptures, and an example of good works.

After he had departed to the Lord, Cuthbert became provost of that monastery, where he instructed many in the rule of monastic life, both by the authority of a master, and the example of his own behaviour. Nor did he bestow his teaching and his example in the monastic life on his monastery alone, but laboured far and wide to convert the people dwelling round about from the life of foolish custom, to the love of heavenly joys; for many profaned the faith which they held by their wicked actions; and some also, in the time of a pestilence, neglecting the mysteries of the faith which they had received, had recourse to the false remedies of idolatry, as if they could have put a stop to the plague sent from God, by incantations, amulets, or any other secrets of the Devil's art. In order to correct the error of both sorts, he often went forth from the monastery, sometimes on horseback, but oftener on foot, and went to the neighbouring townships, where he preached the way of truth to such as had gone astray; which Boisil also in his time had been wont to do. It was then the custom of the English people, that when a clerk or priest came to a township, they all, at his summons, flocked together to hear the Word; willingly heard what was said, and still more willingly practised those things that they could hear and understand. And such was Cuthbert's skill in speaking, so keen his desire to persuade men of what he taught, such a light shone in his angelic face, that no man present dared to conceal from him the secrets of his heart, but all openly revealed in confession what they had done, thinking doubtless that their guilt could in nowise be hidden from him; and having confessed their sins, they wiped them out by fruits worthy of repentance, as he bade them. He was wont chiefly to resort to those places and

preach in those villages which were situated afar off amid steep and wild mountains, so that others dreaded to go thither, and whereof the poverty and barbarity rendered them inaccessible to other teachers. But he, devoting himself entirely to that pious labour, so industriously ministered to them with his wise teaching, that when he went forth from the monastery, he would often stay a whole week, sometimes two or three, or even sometimes a full month, before he returned home, continuing among the hill folk to call that simple people by his preaching and good works to the things of Heaven.

This venerable servant of the Lord, having thus spent many years in the monastery of Mailros, and there become conspicuous by great tokens of virtue, his most reverend abbot, Eata, removed him to the isle of Lindisfarne, that he might there also, by his authority as provost and by the example of his own practice, instruct the brethren in the observance of regular discipline; for the same reverend father then governed that place also as abbot. From ancient times, the bishop was wont to reside there with his clergy, and the abbot with his monks, who were likewise under the paternal care of the bishop; because Aidan, who was the first bishop of the place, being himself a monk, brought monks thither, and settled the monastic institution there; as the blessed Father Augustine is known to have done before in Kent, when the most reverend Pope Gregory wrote to him, as has been said above, to this effect: "But in that you, my brother, having been instructed in monastic rules, must not live apart from your clergy in the Church of the English, which has been lately, by the will of God, converted to the faith, you must establish the manner of conversation of our fathers in the primitive Church, among whom, none said that aught of the things which they possessed was his own; but they had all things common."

Chap. XXVIII.

How the same St. Cuthbert, living the life of an Anchorite, by his prayers obtained a spring in a dry soil, and had a crop from seed sown by the labour of his hands out of season. [676 a.d.]

After this, Cuthbert, as he grew in goodness and intensity of devotion, attained also to a hermit's life of contemplation in silence and solitude, as we have mentioned. But forasmuch as many years ago we wrote enough concerning his life and virtues, both in heroic verse and prose, it may suffice at present only to mention this, that when he was about to go to the island, he declared to the brothers, "If by the grace of God it shall be granted to me, that I may live in that place by the labour of my hands, I will willingly abide there; but if not, God willing, I will very soon return to you." The place was quite destitute of water, corn, and trees; and being infested by evil spirits, was very ill suited for human habitation; but it became in all respects habitable, at the desire of the man of God; for at his coming the wicked spirits departed. When, after expelling the enemy, he had, with the help of the brethren, built himself a narrow dwelling, with a mound about it, and the necessary cells in it, to wit, an oratory and a common living room, he ordered the brothers to dig a pit in the floor of the room, although the ground was hard and stony, and no hopes appeared of any spring. When they had done this relying upon the faith and prayers of the servant of God, the next day it was found to be full of water, and to this day affords abundance of its heavenly bounty to all that resort thither. He also desired that instruments for husbandry might be brought him, and some wheat; but having prepared the ground and sown the wheat at the proper season, no sign of a blade, not to speak of ears, had sprouted from it by the summer. Hereupon, when the brethren visited him according to custom, he ordered barley to be brought him, if haply it were either the nature of the soil, or the will of God, the Giver of all things, that such grain rather should grow there. He sowed it in the same field, when it was brought him, after the proper time of sowing, and therefore without any likelihood of its bearing fruit; but a plentiful crop immediately sprang up, and afforded the man of God the means which he had desired of supporting himself by his own labour.

When he had here served God in solitude many years, the mound which encompassed his dwelling being so high, that he could see nothing from it but heaven, which he thirsted to enter, it happened that a great synod was assembled in the presence of King Egfrid, near the river Alne, at a place called Aduifyrði, which signifies "at the two fords," in which Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, presided, and there Cuthbert was, with one mind and consent of all, chosen bishop of the church of Lindisfarne. They could not, however, draw him from his hermitage, though many messengers and letters were sent to him. At last the aforesaid king himself, with the most

holy Bishop Trumwine, and other religious and powerful men, sailed to the island; many also of the brothers from the isle of Lindisfarne itself, assembled together for the same purpose: they all knelt, and conjured him by the Lord, with tears and entreaties, till they drew him, also in tears, from his beloved retreat, and forced him to go to the synod. When he arrived there, he was very reluctantly overcome by the unanimous resolution of all present, and compelled to take upon himself the duties of the episcopate; being chiefly prevailed upon by the words of Boisil, the servant of God, who, when he had prophetically foretold all things that were to befall him, had also predicted that he should be a bishop. Nevertheless, the consecration was not appointed immediately; but when the winter, which was then at hand, was over, it was carried out at Easter, in the city of York, and in the presence of the aforesaid King Egfrid; seven bishops coming together for his consecration, among whom, Theodore, of blessed memory, was Primate. He was first elected bishop of the church of Hagustald, in the place of Tunbert, who had been deposed from the episcopate; but because he chose rather to be placed over the church of Lindisfarne, in which he had lived, it was thought fit that Eata should return to the see of the church of Hagustald, to which he had been first ordained, and that Cuthbert should take upon him the government of the church of Lindisfarne.

Following the example of the blessed Apostles, he adorned the episcopal dignity by his virtuous deeds; for he both protected the people committed to his charge by constant prayer, and roused them, by wholesome admonitions, to thoughts of Heaven. He first showed in his own life what he taught others to do, a practice which greatly strengthens all teaching; for he was above all things inflamed with the fire of Divine charity, of sober mind and patient, most diligently intent on devout prayers, and kindly to all that came to him for comfort. He thought it stood in the stead of prayer to afford the weak brethren the help of his exhortation, knowing that he who said "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," said likewise, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour." He was noted for penitential abstinence, and was always through the grace of compunction, intent upon heavenly things. And when he offered up to God the Sacrifice of the saving Victim, he commended his prayer to the Lord, not with uplifted voice, but with tears drawn from the bottom of his heart.

Chap. XXIX.

How this bishop foretold that his own death was at hand to the anchorite Herebert. [687 a.d.]

Having spent two years in his bishopric, he returned to his island and hermitage, being warned of God that the day of his death, or rather of his entrance into that life which alone can be called life, was drawing near; as he, at that time, with his wonted candour, signified to certain persons, though in words which were somewhat obscure, but which were nevertheless afterwards plainly understood; while to others he declared the same openly.

There was a certain priest, called Herebert, a man of holy life, who had long been united with the man of God, Cuthbert, in the bonds of spiritual friendship. This man leading a solitary life in the island of that great lake from which the river Derwent flows at its beginning, was wont to visit him every year, and to receive from him the teaching of everlasting salvation. Hearing that Bishop Cuthbert was come to the city of Lugubalia, he went thither to him, according to his custom, seeking to be more and more inflamed in heavenly desires through his wholesome admonitions. Whilst they alternately entertained one another with draughts of the celestial life, the bishop, among other things, said, "Brother Herebert, remember at this time to ask me and speak to me concerning all whereof you have need to ask and speak; for, when we part, we shall never again see one another with bodily eyesight in this world. For I know of a surety that the time of my departure is at hand, and that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle." Hearing these words, Herebert fell down at his feet, with tears and lamentations, and said, "I beseech you, by the Lord, not to forsake me; but to remember your most faithful companion, and entreat the mercy of God that, as we have served Him together upon earth, so we may depart together to behold His grace in Heaven. For you know that I have always endeavoured to live according to the words of your lips, and likewise whatsoever faults I have committed, either through ignorance or frailty, I have instantly sought to amend according to the judgement of your will." The bishop applied himself to prayer, and having presently had intimation in the spirit that he had obtained what he asked of the Lord, he said, "Rise, brother, and do not weep, but rejoice greatly because the mercy of Heaven has granted what we desired."

The event established the truth of this promise and prophecy, for after their parting, they never again saw one another in the flesh; but their spirits quitting their bodies on one and the same day, to wit, the 20th of March, were immediately united in fellowship in the blessed vision, and together translated to the heavenly kingdom by the ministry of angels. But Herebert was first wasted by a long-continued infirmity, through the dispensation of the Lord's mercy, as may be believed, to the end that if he was in any wise inferior in

merit to the blessed Cuthbert, that which was lacking might be supplied by the chastening pain of a long sickness, that being thus made equal in grace to his intercessor, as he departed out of the body at one and the same time with him, so he might be accounted worthy to be received into the like abode of eternal bliss.

The most reverend father died in the isle of Farne, earnestly entreating the brothers that he might also be buried there, where he had served no small time under the Lord's banner. But at length yielding to their entreaties, he consented to be carried back to the isle of Lindisfarne, and there buried in the church. This being done, the venerable Bishop Wilfrid held the episcopal see of that church one year, till such time as a bishop should be chosen to be ordained in the room of Cuthbert. Afterwards Eadbert was ordained, a man renowned for his knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, as also for his observance of the heavenly precepts, and chiefly for almsgiving, so that, according to the law, he gave every year the tenth part, not only of four-footed beasts, but also of all corn and fruit, as also of his garments, to the poor.

Chap. XXX.

How his body was found altogether uncorrupted after it had been buried eleven years; and how his successor in the bishopric departed this world not long after. [698 a.d.]

In order to show forth the great glory of the life after death of the man of God, Cuthbert, whereas the loftiness of his life before his death had been revealed by the testimony of many miracles, when he had been buried eleven years, Divine Providence put it into the minds of the brethren to take up his bones. They thought to find them dry and all the rest of the body consumed and turned to dust, after the manner of the dead, and they desired to put them into a new coffin, and to lay them in the same place, but above the pavement, for the honour due to him. They made known their resolve to Bishop Eadbert, and he consented to it, and bade them to be mindful to do it on the anniversary of his burial. They did so, and opening the grave, found all the body whole, as if he were still alive, and the joints of the limbs pliable, like one asleep rather than dead; besides, all the vestments in which he was clothed were not only undefiled, but marvellous to behold, being fresh and bright as at the first. The brothers seeing this, were struck with a great dread, and hastened to tell the bishop what they had found; he being then alone in a place remote from the church, and encompassed on all sides by the shifting waves of the sea. There he always used to spend the time of Lent, and was wont to pass the forty days before the Nativity of our Lord, in great devotion with abstinence and prayer and tears. There also his venerable predecessor, Cuthbert, had for some time served as the soldier of the Lord in solitude before he went to the isle of Farne.

They brought him also some part of the garments that had covered the holy body; which presents he thankfully accepted, and gladly heard of the miracles, and he kissed the garments even, with great affection, as if they had been still upon his father's body, and said, "Let new garments be put upon the body, in place of these you have brought, and so lay it in the coffin which you have prepared; for I know of a surety that the place will not long remain empty, which has been hallowed with so great grace of heavenly miracles; and how happy is he to whom the Lord, the Author and Giver of all bliss, shall vouchsafe to grant the privilege of resting therein." When the bishop had made an end of saying this and more in like manner, with many tears and great compunction and with faltering tongue, the brothers did as he had commanded them, and when they had wrapped the body in new garments, and laid it in a new coffin, they placed it above the pavement of the sanctuary. Soon after, Bishop Eadbert, beloved of God, fell grievously sick, and his fever daily increasing in severity, ere long, that is, on the 6th of May, he also departed to the Lord, and they laid his body in the grave of the blessed father

Cuthbert, placing over it the coffin, with the uncorrupted remains of that father. The miracles of healing, sometimes wrought in that place testify to the merits of them both; of some of these we have before preserved the memory in the book of his life. But in this History we have thought fit to add some others which have lately come to our knowledge.

Chap. XXXI.

Of one that was cured of a palsy at his tomb.

There was in that same monastery a brother whose name was Badudegn, who had for no small time ministered to the guests of the house, and is still living, having the testimony of all the brothers and strangers resorting thither, of being a man of much piety and religion, and serving the office put upon him only for the sake of the heavenly reward. This man, having one day washed in the sea the coverings or blankets which he used in the guest chamber, was returning home, when on the way, he was seized with a sudden infirmity, insomuch that he fell to the ground, and lay there a long time and could scarce at last rise again. When he got up, he felt one half of his body, from the head to the foot, struck with palsy, and with great trouble made his way home by the help of a staff. The disease increased by degrees, and as night approached, became still worse, so that when day returned, he could scarcely rise or walk alone. Suffering from this trouble, he conceived the wise resolve to go to the church, as best he could, and approach the tomb of the reverend father Cuthbert, and there, on his knees, humbly beseech the mercy of God that he might either be delivered from that disease, if it were well for him, or if by the grace of God it was ordained for him to be chastened longer by this affliction, that he might bear the pain which was laid upon him with patience and a quiet mind.

He did accordingly as he had determined, and supporting his weak limbs with a staff, entered the church. There prostrating himself before the body of the man of God, he prayed with pious earnestness, that, through his intercession, the Lord might be propitious to him. As he prayed, he seemed to fall into a deep sleep, and, as he was afterwards wont to relate, felt a large and broad hand touch his head, where the pain lay, and likewise pass over all that part of his body which had been benumbed by the disease, down to his feet. Gradually the pain departed and health returned. Then he awoke, and rose up in perfect health, and returning thanks to the Lord for his recovery, told the brothers what had been done for him; and to the joy of them all, returned the more zealously, as if chastened by the trial of his affliction, to the service which he was wont before to perform with care.

Moreover, the very garments which had been on Cuthbert's body, dedicated to God, either while he was alive, or after his death, were not without the virtue of healing, as may be seen in the book of his life and miracles, by such as shall read it.

Chap. XXXII.

Of one who was lately cured of a disease in his eye at the relics of St. Cuthbert.

Nor is that cure to be passed over in silence, which was performed by his relics three years ago, and was told me lately by the brother himself, on whom it was wrought. It happened in the monastery, which, being built near the river Dacore, has taken its name from the same, over which, at that time, the religious Suidbert presided as abbot. In that monastery was a youth whose eyelid was disfigured by an unsightly tumour, which growing daily greater, threatened the loss of the eye. The physicians endeavoured to mitigate it by applying ointments, but in vain. Some said it ought to be cut off; others opposed this course, for fear of greater danger. The brother having long laboured under this malady, when no human means availed to save his eye, but rather, it grew daily worse, on a sudden, through the grace of the mercy of God, it came to pass that he was cured by the relics of the holy father, Cuthbert. For when the brethren found his body uncorrupted, after having been many years buried, they took some part of the hair, to give, as relics, to friends who asked for them, or to show, in testimony of the miracle.

One of the priests of the monastery, named Thruired, who is now abbot there, had a small part of these relics by him at that time. One day he went into the church and opened the box of relics, to give some part of them to a friend who asked for it, and it happened that the youth who had the diseased eye was then in the church. The priest, having given his friend as much as he thought fit, gave the rest to the youth to put back into its place. But he having received the hairs of the holy head, prompted by some salutary impulse, applied them to the diseased eyelid, and endeavoured for some time, by the application of them, to abate and mitigate the tumour. Having done this, he again laid the relics in the box, as he had been bidden, believing that his eye would soon be cured by the hairs of the man of God, which had touched it; nor did his faith disappoint him. It was then, as he is wont to relate, about the second hour of the day; but while he was occupied with other thoughts and business of the day, on a sudden, about the sixth hour of the same, touching his eye, he found it and the eyelid as sound as if there never had been any disfigurement or tumour on it.

Book V

Chap. I.

How Ethelwald, successor to Cuthbert, leading a hermit's life, calmed a tempest by his prayers when the brethren were in danger at sea. [687-699 a.d.]

The venerable Ethelwald succeeded the man of God, Cuthbert, in the exercise of a solitary life, which he spent in the isle of Farne before he became a bishop. After he had received the priesthood, he consecrated his office by deeds worthy of that degree for many years in the monastery which is called Inhrypum. To the end that his merit and manner of life may be the more certainly made known, I will relate one miracle of his, which was told me by one of the brothers for and on whom the same was wrought; to wit, Guthfrid, the venerable servant and priest of Christ, who also, afterwards, as abbot, presided over the brethren of the same church of Lindisfarne, in which he was educated.

"I came," says he, "to the island of Farne, with two others of the brethren, desiring to speak with the most reverend father, Ethelwald. Having been refreshed with his discourse, and asked for his blessing, as we were returning home, behold on a sudden, when we were in the midst of the sea, the fair weather in which we were sailing, was broken, and there arose so great and terrible a tempest, that neither sails nor oars were of any use to us, nor had we anything to expect but death. After long struggling with the wind and waves to no effect, at last we looked back to see whether it was possible by any means at least to return to the island whence we came, but we found that we were on all sides alike cut off by the storm, and that there was no hope of escape by our own efforts. But looking further, we perceived, on the island of Farne, our father Ethelwald, beloved of God, come out of his retreat to watch our course; for, hearing the noise of the tempest and raging sea, he had come forth to see what would become of us. When he beheld us in distress and despair, he bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in prayer for our life and safety; and as he finished his prayer, he calmed the swelling water, in such sort that the fierceness of the storm ceased on all sides, and fair winds attended us over a smooth sea to the very shore. When we had landed, and had pulled up our small vessel from the waves, the storm, which had ceased a short time for our sake, presently returned, and raged furiously during the whole day; so that it plainly appeared that the brief interval of calm had been granted by Heaven in answer to the prayers of the man of God, to the end that we might escape."

The man of God remained in the isle of Farne twelve years, and died there; but was buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, in the isle of Lindisfarne, beside the bodies of the aforesaid bishops. These things happened in the days of King Aldfrid, who, after his brother Egfrid, ruled the nation of the Northumbrians for nineteen years.

Chap. II.

How Bishop John cured a dumb man by his blessing. [687 a.d.]

In the beginning of Aldfrid's reign, Bishop Eata died, and was succeeded in the bishopric of the church of Hagustald by the holy man John, of whom those that knew him well are wont to tell many miracles, and more particularly Berthun, a man worthy of all reverence and of undoubted truthfulness, and once his deacon, now abbot of the monastery called Inderauuda, that is, "In the wood of the Deiri": some of which miracles we have thought fit to hand on to posterity. There is a certain remote dwelling enclosed by a mound, among scattered trees, not far from the church of Hagustald, being about a mile and a half distant and separated from it by the river Tyne, having an oratory dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel, where the man of God used frequently, as occasion offered, and specially in Lent, to abide with a few companions and in quiet give himself to prayer and study. Having come hither once at the beginning of Lent to stay, he bade his followers find out some poor man labouring under any grievous infirmity, or want, whom they might keep with them during those days, to receive alms, for so he was always used to do.

There was in a township not far off, a certain youth who was dumb, known to the bishop, for he often used to come into his presence to receive alms. He had never been able to speak one word; besides, he had so much scurf and scab on his head, that no hair could ever grow on the top of it, but only some rough hairs stood on end round about it. The bishop caused this young man to be brought, and a little hut to be made for him within the enclosure of the dwelling, in which he might abide, and receive alms from him every day. When one week of Lent was over, the next Sunday he bade the poor man come to him, and when he had come, he bade him put his tongue out of his mouth and show it him; then taking him by the chin, he made the sign of the Holy Cross on his tongue, directing him to draw it back so signed into his mouth and to speak. "Pronounce some word," said he; "say 'gae,'" which, in the language of the English, is the word of affirming and consenting, that is, yes. The youth's tongue was immediately loosed, and he spoke as he was bidden. The bishop then added the names of the letters: "Say A." He said A. "Say B;" he said B also. When he had repeated all the letters after the bishop, the latter proceeded to put syllables and words to him, and when he had repeated them all rightly he bade him utter whole sentences, and he did it. Nor did he cease all that day and the next night, as long as he could keep awake, as those who were present relate, to say something, and to express his private thoughts and wishes to others, which he could never do before; after the manner of the man long lame, who, when he was healed by the Apostles Peter and John, leaping up, stood and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising the Lord, rejoicing to have the use

of his feet, which he had so long lacked. The bishop, rejoicing with him at his cure, caused the physician to take in hand the healing of the sores of his head. He did as he was bidden, and with the help of the bishop's blessing and prayers, a goodly head of hair grew as the skin was healed. Thus the youth became fair of countenance, ready of speech, with hair curling in comely fashion, whereas before he had been ill-favoured, miserable, and dumb. Thus filled with joy at his recovered health, notwithstanding that the bishop offered to keep him in his own household, he chose rather to return home.

Chap. III.

How he healed a sick maiden by his prayers. [705 a.d.]

The same Berthun told another miracle concerning the said bishop. When the most reverend Wilfrid, after a long banishment, was admitted to the bishopric of the church of Hagustald, and the aforesaid John, upon the death of Bosa, a man of great sanctity and humility, was, in his place, appointed bishop of York, he himself came, once upon a time, to the monastery of nuns, at the place called Wetadun, where the Abbess Heriburg then presided. "When we were come thither," said he, "and had been received with great and universal joy, the abbess told us, that one of the nuns, who was her own daughter after the flesh, laboured under a grievous sickness, for she had been lately let blood in the arm, and whilst she was under treatment, was seized with an attack of sudden pain, which speedily increased, while the wounded arm became worse, and so much swollen, that it could scarce be compassed with both hands; and she lay in bed like to die through excess of pain. Wherefore the abbess entreated the bishop that he would vouchsafe to go in and give her his blessing; for she believed that she would soon be better if he blessed her or laid his hands upon her. He asked when the maiden had been let blood, and being told that it was on the fourth day of the moon, said, 'You did very indiscreetly and unskilfully to let blood on the fourth day of the moon; for I remember that Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, said, that blood-letting at that time was very dangerous, when the light of the moon is waxing and the tide of the ocean is rising. And what can I do for the maiden if she is like to die?'

"But the abbess still earnestly entreated for her daughter, whom she dearly loved, and designed to make abbess in her stead, and at last prevailed with him to go in and visit the sick maiden. Wherefore he went in, taking me with him to the maid, who lay, as I said, in sore anguish, and her arm swelling so greatly that it could not be bent at all at the elbow; and he stood and said a prayer over her, and having given his blessing, went out. Afterwards, as we were sitting at table, at the usual hour, some one came in and called me out, saying, 'Quoenburg' (that was the maid's name) 'desires that you should immediately go back to her.' This I did, and entering the chamber, I found her of more cheerful countenance, and like one in good health. And while I was sitting beside her, she said, 'Shall we call for something to drink?'— 'Yes,' said I, 'and right glad am I, if you can.' When the cup was brought, and we had both drunk, she said, 'As soon as the bishop had said the prayer for me and given me his blessing and had gone out, I immediately began to mend; and though I have not yet recovered my former strength, yet all the pain is quite gone both from my arm, where it was most burning, and from all my body, as if the bishop had carried it away with him; notwithstanding the

swelling of the arm still seems to remain.’ But when we departed thence, the cure of the pain in her limbs was followed by the assuaging of the grievous swelling; and the maiden being thus delivered from pains and death, returned praise to our Lord and Saviour, in company with His other servants who were there.”

Chap. IV.

How he healed a thegn's wife that was sick, with holy water.

The same abbot related another miracle, not unlike the former, of the aforesaid bishop. "Not very far from our monastery," he said, "to wit, about two miles off, was the township of one Puch, a thegn, whose wife had lain sick of a very grievous disease for nearly forty days, insomuch that for three weeks she could not be carried out of the chamber where she lay. It happened that the man of God was, at that time, called thither by the thegn to consecrate a church; and when that was done, the thegn desired him to come into his house and dine. The bishop declined, saying that he must return to the monastery, which was very near. The thegn, entreating him more earnestly, vowed he would also give alms to the poor, if so be that the bishop would vouchsafe to enter his house that day and break his fast. I joined my entreaties to his, promising in like manner to give alms for the relief of the poor, if he would but go and dine at the thegn's house, and give his blessing. Having at length, with much difficulty, prevailed, we went in to refresh ourselves. The bishop had sent to the woman that lay sick some of the holy water, which he had blessed for the consecration of the church, by one of the brothers who had come with me, ordering him to give her some to drink, and wash that part of her where he found that her pain was greatest, with some of the same water. This being done, the woman immediately got up whole and sound, and perceiving that she had not only been delivered from her long sickness, but at the same time had recovered the strength which she had lost for so great a time, she presented the cup to the bishop and to us, and continued serving us with meat and drink as she had begun, till dinner was over; following the example of the blessed Peter's wife's mother, who, having been sick of a fever, arose at the touch of our Lord's hand, and having forthwith received health and strength, ministered to them."

Chap. V.

How he likewise recalled by his prayers a thegn's servant from death.

At another time also, being called to consecrate the church of a thegn named Addi, when he had performed the required duty, he was entreated by the thegn to go in to one of his servants, who lay dangerously ill, insomuch that having lost all use of his limbs, he seemed to be at the point of death; and moreover the coffin had been made ready wherein to bury him after his death. The thegn urged his entreaties with tears, earnestly beseeching him that he would go in and pray for the servant, because his life was of great moment to him; and he believed that if the bishop would lay his hand upon him and give him his blessing, he would soon mend. So the bishop went in, and saw him very near death, and by his side the coffin in which he was to be laid for his burial, whilst all mourned. He said a prayer and blessed him, and going out, spake the wonted words of comfort, "Good health be yours and that speedily." Afterwards, when they were sitting at table, the servant sent to his lord, desiring that he would let him have a cup of wine, because he was thirsty. The thegn, rejoicing greatly that he could drink, sent him a cup of wine, blessed by the bishop; and, as soon as he had drunk it, he immediately got up, and, shaking off the heaviness of his infirmity, dressed himself and went forth, and going in to the bishop, saluted him and the other guests, saying that he also would gladly eat and drink with them. They bade him sit down with them at table, greatly rejoicing at his recovery. He sat down, ate and drank and made merry, and behaved himself like the rest of the company; and living many years after, continued in the same health which he had gained. The aforesaid abbot says this miracle was not wrought in his presence, but that he had it from those who were present.

Chap. VI.

How, both by his prayers and blessing, he recalled from death one of his clerks, who had bruised himself by a fall.

Nor do I think that this miracle, which Herebald, the servant of Christ, says was wrought upon himself by the bishop, is to be passed over in silence. He was then one of that bishop's clergy, but now presides as abbot in the monastery at the mouth of the river Tyne. "Living with him," said he, "and being very well acquainted with his course of life, I found it to be in all points worthy of a bishop, as far as it is lawful for men to judge; but I have known by the experience of others, and more particularly by my own, how great his merit was before Him Who seeth the heart; having been by his prayer and blessing recalled from the threshold of death and brought back to the way of life. For, when in the prime of my youth, I lived among his clergy, applying myself to reading and singing, but not having yet altogether withdrawn my heart from youthful pleasures, it happened one day that, as we were travelling with him, we came into a plain and open road, well fitted for galloping. The young men that were with him, and especially the laymen, began to entreat the bishop to give them leave to gallop, and make trial of their horses one with another. He at first refused, saying that it was an idle request; but at last, overcome by the unanimous desire of so many, 'Do so,' said he, 'if you will, but let Herebald have no part in the trial.' Then I earnestly prayed that I might have leave to compete with the rest, for I relied on an excellent horse, which he had himself given me, but I could in no wise obtain my request.

"When they had several times galloped backwards and forwards, the bishop and I looking on, my wanton humour prevailed, and I could no longer refrain, but though he forbade me, I struck in among them at their sport, and began to ride with them at full speed; whereat I heard him call after me with a groan, 'Alas! how much you grieve me by riding after that manner.' Though I heard him, I went on against his command; but immediately the fiery horse taking a great leap over a hollow place in the way, I fell, and at once lost all sense and motion, like one dying; for there was in that place a stone, level with the ground, covered with only a thin coating of turf, and no other stone was to be found in all that expanse of plain; and it happened by chance, or rather by Divine Providence so ordering it, to punish my disobedience, that my head and my hand, which in falling I had put under my head, struck upon that stone, so that my thumb was broken and my skull fractured, and I became, as I said, like one dead.

"And because I could not move, they stretched a tent there for me to lie in. It was about the seventh hour of the day, and having lain still and as it were dead from that time till the evening, I then revived a little, and was carried home by my companions, and lay speechless all the night, vomiting blood,

because something was broken within me by the fall. The bishop was very much grieved at my fall and my misfortune, for he bore me extraordinary affection. Nor would he stay that night, as he was wont, among his clergy; but spent it alone in watching and prayer, imploring the Divine goodness, as I suppose, for my preservation. Coming to me early in the morning, and having said a prayer over me, he called me by my name, and when I awoke as it were out of a heavy sleep, he asked whether I knew who it was that spoke to me? I opened my eyes and said, ‘Yes; you are my beloved bishop.’— ‘Can you live?’ said he. I answered, ‘I can, through your prayers, if the Lord will.’

“He then laid his hand on my head, with the words of blessing, and returned to prayer; when he came again to see me, in a short time, he found me sitting and able to talk; and, being moved by Divine inspiration, as it soon appeared, began to ask me, whether I knew for certain that I had been baptized? I answered that I knew beyond all doubt that I had been washed in the font of salvation, for the remission of sins, and I named the priest by whom I knew that I had been baptized. He replied, ‘If you were baptized by that priest, your baptism is not perfect; for I know him, and that when he was ordained priest, he could in no wise, by reason of the dulness of his understanding, learn the ministry of catechizing and baptizing; for which reason I enjoined upon him altogether to desist from presuming to exercise that ministry, which he could not duly perform.’ This said, he set himself to catechize me that same hour; and it came to pass that when he breathed on my face, straightway I felt better. He called the surgeon and ordered him to set and bind up my skull where it was fractured; and presently having received his blessing, I was so much better that I mounted on horseback the next day, and travelled with him to another place; and being soon after perfectly recovered, I was washed in the water of life.”

He continued in his bishopric thirty-three years, and then ascending to the heavenly kingdom, was buried in St. Peter’s Chapel, in his own monastery, which is called, “In the wood of the Deiri,” in the year of our Lord 721. For having, by his great age, become unable to govern his bishopric, he ordained Wilfrid, his priest, bishop of the church of York, and retired to the aforesaid monastery, and there ended his days in godly conversation.

Chap. VII.

How Caedwalla, king of the West Saxons, went to Rome to be baptized; and his successor Ini, also devoutly journeyed to the same threshold of the holy Apostles. [688 a.d.]

In the third year of the reign of Aldfrid, Caedwalla, king of the West Saxons, having most vigorously governed his nation for two years, quitted his crown for the sake of the Lord and an everlasting kingdom, and went to Rome, being desirous to obtain the peculiar honour of being cleansed in the baptismal font at the threshold of the blessed Apostles, for he had learned that in Baptism alone the entrance into the heavenly life is opened to mankind; and he hoped at the same time, that being made clean by Baptism, he should soon be freed from the bonds of the flesh and pass to the eternal joys of Heaven; both which things, by the help of the Lord, came to pass according as he had conceived in his mind. For coming to Rome, at the time that Sergius was pope, he was baptized on the Holy Saturday before Easter Day, in the year of our Lord 689, and being still in his white garments, he fell sick, and was set free from the bonds of the flesh on the 20th of April, and obtained an entrance into the kingdom of the blessed in Heaven. At his baptism, the aforesaid pope had given him the name of Peter, to the end, that he might be also united in name to the most blessed chief of the Apostles, to whose most holy body his pious love had led him from the utmost bounds of the earth. He was likewise buried in his church, and by the pope's command an epitaph was written on his tomb, wherein the memory of his devotion might be preserved for ever, and the readers or hearers thereof might be stirred up to give themselves to religion by the example of what he had done.

The epitaph was this: —

“High estate, wealth, offspring, a mighty kingdom, triumphs, spoils, chieftains, strongholds, the camp, a home; whatsoever the valour of his sires, whatsoever himself had won, Caedwal, mighty in war, left for the love of God, that, a pilgrim king, he might behold Peter and Peter's seat, receive at his font pure waters of life, and in bright draughts drink of the shining radiance whence a quickening glory streams through all the world. And even as he gained with eager soul the prize of the new life, he laid aside barbaric rage, and, changed in heart, he changed his name with joy. Sergius the Pope bade him be called Peter, himself his father, when he rose born anew from the font, and the grace of Christ, cleansing him, bore him forthwith clothed in white raiment to the heights of Heaven. O wondrous faith of the king, but greatest of all the mercy of Christ, into whose counsels none may enter! For he came in safety from the ends of the earth, even from Britain, through many a nation, over many a sea, by many a path, and saw the city of Romulus and looked upon Peter's sanctuary revered, bearing mystic gifts. He shall walk in

white among the sheep of Christ in fellowship with them; for his body is in the tomb, but his soul on high. Thou mightest deem he did but change an earthly for a heavenly sceptre, whom thou seest attain to the kingdom of Christ.”

“Here was buried Caedwalla, called also Peter, king of the Saxons, on the twentieth day of April, in the second indiction, aged about thirty years, in the reign of our most pious lord, the Emperor Justinian, in the fourth year of his consulship, in the second year of the pontificate of our Apostolic lord, Pope Sergius.”

When Caedwalla went to Rome, Ini succeeded to the kingdom, being of the blood royal; and having reigned thirty-seven years over that nation, he in like manner left his kingdom and committed it to younger men, and went away to the threshold of the blessed Apostles, at the time when Gregory was pope, being desirous to spend some part of his pilgrimage upon earth in the neighbourhood of the holy places, that he might obtain to be more readily received into the fellowship of the saints in heaven. This same thing, about that time, was wont to be done most zealously by many of the English nation, nobles and commons, laity and clergy, men and women.

Chap. VIII.

How, when Archbishop Theodore died, Bertwald succeeded him as archbishop, and, among many others whom he ordained, he made the learned Tobias bishop of the church of Rochester. [690 a.d.]

The year after that in which Caedwalla died at Rome, that is, 690 after the Incarnation of our Lord, Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, departed this life, being old and full of days, for he was eighty-eight years of age; which number of years he had been wont long before to foretell to his friends that he should live, the same having been revealed to him in a dream. He held the bishopric twenty-two years, and was buried in St. Peter's church, where all the bodies of the bishops of Canterbury are buried. Of whom, as well as of his fellows of the same degree, it may rightly and truly be said, that their bodies are buried in peace, and their names shall live to all generations. For to say all in few words, the English Churches gained more spiritual increase while he was archbishop, than ever before. His character, life, age, and death, are plainly and manifestly described to all that resort thither, by the epitaph on his tomb, in thirty-four heroic verses. The first whereof are these:

“Here in the tomb rests the body of the holy prelate, called now in the Greek tongue Theodore. Chief pontiff, blest high priest, pure doctrine he set forth to his disciples.”

The last are as follow:

“For September had reached its nineteenth day, when his spirit went forth from the prison-bars of the flesh. Mounting in bliss to the gracious fellowship of the new life, he was united to the angelic citizens in the heights of Heaven.”

Bertwald succeeded Theodore in the archbishopric, being abbot of the monastery called Racuulfe, which stands at the northern mouth of the river Genlade. He was a man learned in the Scriptures, and perfectly instructed in ecclesiastical and monastic teaching, yet in no wise to be compared to his predecessor. He was chosen bishop in the year of our Lord 692, on the first day of July, when Wictred and Suaebhard were kings in Kent; but he was ordained the next year, on Sunday the 29th of June, by Godwin, metropolitan bishop of Gaul, and was enthroned on Sunday the 31st of August. Among the many bishops whom he ordained was Tobias, a man instructed in the Latin, Greek, and Saxon tongues, and otherwise of manifold learning, whom he consecrated in the stead of Gedmund, bishop of the Church of Rochester, who had died.

Chap. IX.

How the holy man, Egbert, would have gone into Germany to preach, but could not; and how Wictbert went, but because he availed nothing, returned into Ireland, whence he came. [Circ. 688 a.d.]

At that time the venerable servant of Christ, and priest, Egbert, who is to be named with all honour, and who, as was said before, lived as a stranger and pilgrim in Ireland to obtain hereafter a country in heaven, purposed in his mind to profit many, taking upon him the work of an apostle, and, by preaching the Gospel, to bring the Word of God to some of those nations that had not yet heard it; many of which tribes he knew to be in Germany, from whom the Angles or Saxons, who now inhabit Britain, are known to have derived their race and origin; for which reason they are still corruptly called "Garmans" by the neighbouring nation of the Britons. Such are the Frisians, the Rugini, the Danes, the Huns, the Old Saxons, and the Boructuari. There are also in the same parts many other peoples still enslaved to pagan rites, to whom the aforesaid soldier of Christ determined to go, sailing round Britain, if haply he could deliver any of them from Satan, and bring them to Christ; or if this might not be, he was minded to go to Rome, to see and adore the thresholds of the holy Apostles and martyrs of Christ.

But a revelation from Heaven and the working of God prevented him from achieving either of these enterprises; for when he had made choice of most courageous companions, fit to preach the Word, inasmuch as they were renowned for their good deeds and their learning, and when all things necessary were provided for the voyage, there came to him on a certain day early in the morning one of the brethren, who had been a disciple of the priest, Boisil, beloved of God, and had ministered to him in Britain, when the said Boisil was provost of the monastery of Mailros, under the Abbot Eata, as has been said above. This brother told him a vision which he had seen that night. "When after matins," said he, "I had laid me down in my bed, and was fallen into a light slumber, Boisil, that was sometime my master and brought me up in all love, appeared to me, and asked, whether I knew him? I said, 'Yes, you are Boisil.' He answered, 'I am come to bring Egbert a message from our Lord and Saviour, which must nevertheless be delivered to him by you. Tell him, therefore, that he cannot perform the journey he has undertaken; for it is the will of God that he should rather go to teach the monasteries of Columba.'" Now Columba was the first teacher of the Christian faith to the Picts beyond the mountains northward, and the first founder of the monastery in the island of Hii, which was for a long time much honoured by many tribes of the Scots and Picts. The said Columba is now by some called Columcille, the name being compounded from "Columba" and "Cella." Egbert, having heard the words of the vision, charged the brother that had told it him, not to

tell it to any other, lest haply it should be a lying vision. But when he considered the matter secretly with himself, he apprehended that it was true, yet would not desist from preparing for his voyage which he purposed to make to teach those nations.

A few days after the aforesaid brother came again to him, saying that Boisil had that night again appeared to him in a vision after matins, and said, "Why did you tell Egbert so negligently and after so lukewarm a manner that which I enjoined upon you to say? Yet, go now and tell him, that whether he will or no, he must go to Columba's monasteries, because their ploughs are not driven straight; and he must bring them back into the right way." Hearing this, Egbert again charged the brother not to reveal the same to any man. Though now assured of the vision, he nevertheless attempted to set forth upon his intended voyage with the brethren. When they had put aboard all that was requisite for so long a voyage, and had waited some days for fair winds, there arose one night so violent a storm, that part of what was on board was lost, and the ship itself was left lying on its side in the sea. Nevertheless, all that belonged to Egbert and his companions was saved. Then he, saying, in the words of the prophet, "For my sake this great tempest is upon you," withdrew himself from that undertaking and was content to remain at home.

But one of his companions, called Wictbert, notable for his contempt of the world and for his learning and knowledge, for he had lived many years as a stranger and pilgrim in Ireland, leading a hermit's life in great perfection, took ship, and arriving in Frisland, preached the Word of salvation for the space of two whole years to that nation and to its king, Rathbed; but reaped no fruit of all his great labour among his barbarous hearers. Returning then to the chosen place of his pilgrimage, he gave himself up to the Lord in his wonted life of silence, and since he could not be profitable to strangers by teaching them the faith, he took care to be the more profitable to his own people by the example of his virtue.

Chap. X.

How Wilbrord, preaching in Frisland, converted many to Christ; and how his two companions, the Hewalds, suffered martyrdom. [690 a.d.]

When the man of God, Egbert, perceived that neither he himself was permitted to go and preach to the nations, being withheld for the sake of some other advantage to the holy Church, whereof he had been forewarned by a revelation; nor that Wictbert, when he went into those parts, had availed to do anything; he nevertheless still attempted to send holy and industrious men to the work of the Word, among whom the most notable was Wilbrord, a man eminent for his merit and rank as priest. They arrived there, twelve in number, and turning aside to Pippin, duke of the Franks, were gladly received by him; and as he had lately subdued the nearer part of Frisland, and expelled King Rathbed, he sent them thither to preach, supporting them at the same time with his sovereign authority, that none might molest them in their preaching, and bestowing many favours on those who consented to receive the faith. Thus it came to pass, that with the help of the Divine grace, in a short time they converted many from idolatry to the faith of Christ.

Following their example, two other priests of the English nation, who had long lived as strangers in Ireland, for the sake of the eternal country, went into the province of the Old Saxons, if haply they could there win any to Christ by their preaching. They were alike in name as in devotion, Hewald being the name of both, with this distinction, that, on account of the different colour of their hair, the one was called Black Hewald and the other White Hewald. They were both full of religious piety, but Black Hewald was the more learned of the two in Scripture. When they came into the province, these men took up their lodging in the guesthouse of a certain township-reeve, and asked of him that he would conduct them to the ealdorman who was over him, for that they had a message concerning matters of importance to communicate to him. For those Old Saxons have no king, but many ealdormen set over their nation; and when any war is on the point of breaking out, they cast lots indifferently, and on whomsoever the lot falls, him they all follow and obey during the time of war; but as soon as the war is ended, all those ealdormen are again equal in power. So the reeve received and entertained them in his house some days, promising to send them to the ealdorman who was over him, as they desired.

But when the barbarians perceived that they were of another religion, — for they continually gave themselves to singing of psalms and prayer, and daily offered up to God the Sacrifice of the saving Victim, having with them sacred vessels and a consecrated table for an altar, — they began to grow suspicious of them, lest if they should come into the presence of their ealdorman, and converse with him, they should turn his heart from their gods,

and convert him to the new religion of the Christian faith; and thus by degrees all their province should be forced to change its old worship for a new. Wherefore on a sudden they laid hold of them and put them to death; and White Hewald they slew outright with the sword; but they put Black Hewald to lingering torture and tore him limb from limb in horrible fashion, and they threw their bodies into the Rhine. The ealdorman, whom they had desired to see, hearing of it, was very angry that strangers who desired to come to him had not been suffered to come; and therefore he sent and put to death all those villagers and burned their village. The aforesaid priests and servants of Christ suffered on the 3rd of October.

Miracles from Heaven were not lacking at their martyrdom. For their dead bodies, having been cast into the river by the pagans, as has been said, were carried against the stream for the space of almost forty miles, to the place where their companions were. Moreover, a long ray of light, reaching up to heaven, shone every night above them wheresoever they chanced to be, and that too in the sight of the very pagans that had slain them. Moreover, one of them appeared in a vision by night to one of his companions, whose name was Tilmon, a man of renown and of noble birth in this world, who having been a thegn had become a monk, telling him that he might find their bodies in that place, where he should see rays of light reaching from heaven to the earth. And so it befell; and their bodies being found, were buried with the honour due to martyrs; and the day of their passion or of the finding of their bodies, is celebrated in those parts with fitting veneration. Finally, Pippin, the most glorious duke of the Franks, learning these things, caused the bodies to be brought to him, and buried them with much honour in the church of the city of Cologne, on the Rhine. And it is said that a spring burst forth in the place where they were killed, which to this day affords a plentiful stream in that same place.

Chap. XI.

How the venerable Suidbert in Britain, and Wilbrord at Rome, were ordained bishops for Frisland. [692 a.d.]

At their first coming into Frisland, as soon as Wilbrord found that he had leave given him by the prince to preach there, he made haste to go to Rome, where Pope Sergius then presided over the Apostolic see, that he might undertake the desired work of preaching the Gospel to the nations, with his licence and blessing; and hoping to receive of him some relics of the blessed Apostles and martyrs of Christ; to the end, that when he destroyed the idols, and erected churches in the nation to which he preached, he might have the relics of saints at hand to put into them, and having deposited them there, might accordingly dedicate each of those places to the honour of the saint whose relics they were. He desired also there to learn or to receive many other things needful for so great a work. Having obtained his desire in all these matters, he returned to preach.

At which time, the brothers who were in Frisland, attending on the ministry of the Word, chose out of their own number a man of sober life, and meek of heart, called Suidbert, to be ordained bishop for them. He, being sent into Britain, was consecrated, at their request, by the most reverend Bishop Wilfrid, who, having been driven out of his country, chanced then to be living in banishment among the Mercians; for Kent had no bishop at that time, Theodore being dead, and Bertwald, his successor, who had gone beyond the sea to be ordained, having not yet returned to his episcopal see.

The said Suidbert, being made bishop, returned from Britain, and not long after departed to the Boructuari; and by his preaching brought many of them into the way of truth; but the Boructuari being not long after subdued by the Old Saxons, those who had received the Word were dispersed abroad; and the bishop himself with certain others went to Pippin, who, at the request of his wife, Blithryda, gave him a place of abode in a certain island on the Rhine, called in their tongue, Inlitore; there he built a monastery, which his successors still possess, and for a time dwelt in it, leading a most continent life, and there ended his days.

When they who had gone thither had spent some years teaching in Frisland, Pippin, with the consent of them all, sent the venerable Wilbrord to Rome, where Sergius was still pope, desiring that he might be consecrated archbishop over the nation of the Frisians; which was accordingly done, as he had made request, in the year of our Lord 696. He was consecrated in the church of the Holy Martyr Cecilia, on her festival; and the said pope gave him the name of Clement, and forthwith sent him back to his bishopric, to wit, fourteen days after his arrival in the city.

Pippin gave him a place for his episcopal see, in his famous fort, which in the ancient language of those people is called Wiltaburg, that is, the town of the Wilts; but, in the Gallic tongue, Trajectum. The most reverend prelate having built a church there, and preaching the Word of faith far and near, drew many from their errors, and built many churches and not a few monasteries. For not long after he himself constituted other bishops in those parts from the number of the brethren that either came with him or after him to preach there; of whom some are now fallen asleep in the Lord; but Wilbrord himself, surnamed Clement, is still living, venerable for his great age, having been thirty-six years a bishop, and now, after manifold conflicts of the heavenly warfare, he longs with all his heart for the recompense of the reward in Heaven.

Chap. XII.

How one in the province of the Northumbrians, rose from the dead, and related many things which he had seen, some to be greatly dreaded and some to be desired. [Circ. 696 a.d.]

At this time a memorable miracle, and like to those of former days, was wrought in Britain; for, to the end that the living might be roused from the death of the soul, a certain man, who had been some time dead, rose again to the life of the body, and related many memorable things that he had seen; some of which I have thought fit here briefly to describe. There was a certain householder in that district of the Northumbrians which is called Incuneningum, who led a godly life, with all his house. This man fell sick, and his sickness daily increasing, he was brought to extremity, and died in the beginning of the night; but at dawn he came to life again, and suddenly sat up, whereat all those that sat about the body weeping fled away in great terror, only his wife, who loved him better, though trembling and greatly afraid, remained with him. And he comforting her, said, "Fear not, for I am now in very deed risen from death whereof I was holden, and permitted again to live among men; nevertheless, hereafter I must not live as I was wont, but after a very different manner." Then rising immediately, he went to the oratory of the little town, and continuing in prayer till day, forthwith divided all his substance into three parts; one whereof he gave to his wife, another to his children, and the third, which he kept himself, he straightway distributed among the poor. Not long after, being set free from the cares of this world, he came to the monastery of Mailros, which is almost enclosed by the winding of the river Tweed, and having received the tonsure, went apart into a place of abode which the abbot had provided, and there he continued till the day of his death, in so great contrition of mind and mortifying of the body, that even if his tongue had been silent, his life would have declared that he had seen many things either to be dreaded or coveted, which were hidden from other men.

Thus he related what he had seen. "He that led me had a countenance full of light, and shining raiment, and we went in silence, as it seemed to me, towards the rising of the summer sun. And as we walked we came to a broad and deep valley of infinite length; it lay on our left, and one side of it was exceeding terrible with raging flames, the other no less intolerable for violent hail and cold snows drifting and sweeping through all the place. Both sides were full of the souls of men which seemed to be tossed from one side to the other as it were by a violent storm; for when they could no longer endure the fervent heat, the hapless souls leaped into the midst of the deadly cold; and finding no rest there, they leaped back again to be burnt in the midst of the unquenchable flames. Now whereas an innumerable multitude of misshapen spirits were thus tormented far and near with this interchange of misery, as far

as I could see, without any interval of rest, I began to think that peradventure this might be Hell, of whose intolerable torments I had often heard men talk. My guide, who went before me, answered to my thought, saying, 'Think not so, for this is not the Hell you believe it to be.'

"When he had led me farther by degrees, sore dismayed by that dread sight, on a sudden I saw the place before us begin to grow dark and filled with shadows. When we entered into them, the shadows by degrees grew so thick, that I could see nothing else, save only the darkness and the shape and garment of him that led me. As we went on 'through the shades in the lone night,' lo! on a sudden there appeared before us masses of foul flame constantly rising as it were out of a great pit, and falling back again into the same. When I had been led thither, my guide suddenly vanished, and left me alone in the midst of darkness and these fearful sights. As those same masses of fire, without intermission, at one time flew up and at another fell back into the bottom of the abyss, I perceived that the summits of all the flames, as they ascended were full of the spirits of men, which, like sparks flying upwards with the smoke, were sometimes thrown on high, and again, when the vapours of the fire fell, dropped down into the depths below. Moreover, a stench, foul beyond compare, burst forth with the vapours, and filled all those dark places.

"Having stood there a long time in much dread, not knowing what to do, which way to turn, or what end awaited me, on a sudden I heard behind me the sound of a mighty and miserable lamentation, and at the same time noisy laughter, as of a rude multitude insulting captured enemies. When that noise, growing plainer, came up to me, I beheld a crowd of evil spirits dragging five souls of men, wailing and shrieking, into the midst of the darkness, whilst they themselves exulted and laughed. Among those human souls, as I could discern, there was one shorn like a clerk, one a layman, and one a woman. The evil spirits that dragged them went down into the midst of the burning pit; and it came to pass that as they went down deeper, I could no longer distinguish between the lamentation of the men and the laughing of the devils, yet I still had a confused sound in my ears. In the meantime, some of the dark spirits ascended from that flaming abyss, and running forward, beset me on all sides, and with their flaming eyes and the noisome fire which they breathed forth from their mouths and nostrils, tried to choke me; and threatened to lay hold on me with fiery tongs, which they had in their hands, yet they durst in no wise touch me, though they assayed to terrify me. Being thus on all sides encompassed with enemies and shades of darkness, and casting my eyes hither and thither if haply anywhere help might be found whereby I might be saved, there appeared behind me, on the way by which I had come, as it were, the brightness of a star shining amidst the darkness; which waxing greater by degrees, came rapidly towards me: and when it drew near, all those evil spirits, that sought to carry me away with their tongs, dispersed and fled.

"Now he, whose approach put them to flight, was the same that led me before; who, then turning towards the right, began to lead me, as it were,

towards the rising of the winter sun, and having soon brought me out of the darkness, led me forth into an atmosphere of clear light. While he thus led me in open light, I saw a vast wall before us, the length on either side, and the height whereof, seemed to be altogether boundless. I began to wonder why we went up to the wall, seeing no door in it, nor window, nor any way of ascent. But when we came to the wall, we were presently, I know not by what means, on the top of it, and lo! there was a wide and pleasant plain full of such fragrance of blooming flowers that the marvellous sweetness of the scents immediately dispelled the foul stench of the dark furnace which had filled my nostrils. So great was the light shed over all this place that it seemed to exceed the brightness of the day, or the rays of the noontide sun. In this field were innumerable companies of men clothed in white, and many seats of rejoicing multitudes. As he led me through the midst of bands of happy inhabitants, I began to think that this perchance might be the kingdom of Heaven, of which I had often heard tell. He answered to my thought, saying, 'Nay, this is not the kingdom of Heaven, as you think.'

"When we had also passed those mansions of blessed spirits, and gone farther on, I saw before me a much more beautiful light than before, and therein heard sweet sounds of singing, and so wonderful a fragrance was shed abroad from the place, that the other which I had perceived before and thought so great, then seemed to me but a small thing; even as that wondrous brightness of the flowery field, compared with this which I now beheld, appeared mean and feeble. When I began to hope that we should enter that delightful place, my guide, on a sudden stood still; and straightway turning, led me back by the way we came.

"In our return, when we came to those joyous mansions of the white-robed spirits, he said to me, 'Do you know what all these things are which you have seen?' I answered, 'No,' and then he said, 'That valley which you beheld terrible with flaming fire and freezing cold, is the place in which the souls of those are tried and punished, who, delaying to confess and amend their crimes, at length have recourse to repentance at the point of death, and so go forth from the body; but nevertheless because they, even at their death, confessed and repented, they shall all be received into the kingdom of Heaven at the day of judgement; but many are succoured before the day of judgement, by the prayers of the living and their alms and fasting, and more especially by the celebration of Masses. Moreover that foul flaming pit which you saw, is the mouth of Hell, into which whosoever falls shall never be delivered to all eternity. This flowery place, in which you see this fair and youthful company, all bright and joyous, is that into which the souls of those are received who, indeed, when they leave the body have done good works, but who are not so perfect as to deserve to be immediately admitted into the kingdom of Heaven; yet they shall all, at the day of judgement, behold Christ, and enter into the joys of His kingdom; for such as are perfect in every word and deed and thought, as soon as they quit the body, forthwith enter into the kingdom of

Heaven; in the neighbourhood whereof that place is, where you heard the sound of sweet singing amidst the savour of a sweet fragrance and brightness of light. As for you, who must now return to the body, and again live among men, if you will seek diligently to examine your actions, and preserve your manner of living and your words in righteousness and simplicity, you shall, after death, have a place of abode among these joyful troops of blessed souls which you behold. For when I left you for awhile, it was for this purpose, that I might learn what should become of you.' When he had said this to me, I much abhorred returning to the body, being delighted with the sweetness and beauty of the place which I beheld, and with the company of those I saw in it. Nevertheless, I durst not ask my guide anything; but thereupon, on a sudden, I found myself, I know not how, alive among men."

Now these and other things which this man of God had seen, he would not relate to slothful men, and such as lived negligently; but only to those who, being terrified with the dread of torments, or ravished with the hope of everlasting joys, would draw from his words the means to advance in piety. In the neighbourhood of his cell lived one Haemgils, a monk, and eminent in the priesthood, whose good works were worthy of his office: he is still living, and leading a solitary life in Ireland, supporting his declining age with coarse bread and cold water. He often went to that man, and by repeated questioning, heard of him what manner of things he had seen when out of the body; by whose account those few particulars which we have briefly set down came also to our knowledge. And he related his visions to King Aldfrid, a man most learned in all respects, and was by him so willingly and attentively heard, that at his request he was admitted into the monastery above-mentioned, and received the crown of the monastic tonsure; and the said king, whensoever he came into those parts, very often went to hear him. At that time the abbot and priest Ethelwald, a man of godly and sober life, presided over that monastery. He now occupies the episcopal see of the church of Lindisfarne, leading a life worthy of his degree.

He had a place of abode assigned him apart in that monastery, where he might give himself more freely to the service of his Creator in continual prayer. And inasmuch as that place was on the banks of the river, he was wont often to go into the same for the great desire he had to do penance in his body, and oftentimes to plunge in it, and to continue saying psalms or prayers in the same as long as he could endure it, standing still, while the waves flowed over him, sometimes up to the middle, and sometimes even to the neck in water; and when he went ashore, he never took off his cold, wet garments till they grew warm and dry on his body. And when in the winter the cracking pieces of ice were floating about him, which he had himself sometimes broken, to make room to stand or plunge in the river, and those who beheld it would say, "We marvel, brother Drythelm (for so he was called), that you are able to endure such severe cold;" he answered simply, for he was a simple and sober-spirited man, "I have seen greater cold." And when they said, "We marvel that

you choose to observe so hard a rule of continence,” he replied, “I have seen harder things.” And so, until the day of his calling hence, in his unwearied desire of heavenly bliss, he subdued his aged body with daily fasting, and forwarded the salvation of many by his words and life.

Chap. XIII.

How another contrarywise before his death saw a book containing his sins, which was shown him by devils. [704-709 a.d.]

But contrarywise there was a man in the province of the Mercians, whose visions and words, but not his manner of life, were of profit to others, though not to himself. In the reign of Coenred, who succeeded Ethelred, there was a layman who was a king's thegn, no less acceptable to the king for his outward industry, than displeasing to him for his neglect of his own soul. The king diligently admonished him to confess and amend, and to forsake his evil ways, lest he should lose all time for repentance and amendment by a sudden death. But though frequently warned, he despised the words of salvation, and promised that he would do penance at some future time. In the meantime, falling sick he betook himself to his bed, and was tormented with grievous pains. The king coming to him (for he loved the man much) exhorted him, even then, before death, to repent of his offences. But he answered that he would not then confess his sins, but would do it when he was recovered of his sickness, lest his companions should upbraid him with having done that for fear of death, which he had refused to do in health. He thought he spoke very bravely, but it afterwards appeared that he had been miserably deceived by the wiles of the Devil.

The disease increasing, when the king came again to visit and instruct him, he cried out straightway with a lamentable voice, "What will you now? What are you come for? for you can no longer do aught for my profit or salvation." The king answered, "Say not so; take heed and be of sound mind." "I am not mad," replied he, "but I now know the worst and have it for certain before my eyes." "What is that?" said the king. "Not long since," said he, "there came into this room two fair youths, and sat down by me, the one at my head, and the other at my feet. One of them drew forth a book most beautiful, but very small, and gave it me to read; looking into it, I there found all the good actions I had ever done in my life written down, and they were very few and inconsiderable. They took back the book and said nothing to me. Then, on a sudden, appeared an army of evil spirits of hideous countenance, and they beset this house without, and sitting down filled the greater part of it within. Then he, who by the blackness of his gloomy face, and his sitting above the rest, seemed to be the chief of them, taking out a book terrible to behold, of a monstrous size, and of almost insupportable weight, commanded one of his followers to bring it to me to read. Having read it, I found therein most plainly written in hideous characters, all the crimes I ever committed, not only in word and deed, but even in the least thought; and he said to those glorious men in white raiment who sat by me, 'Why sit ye here, since ye know of a surety that this man is ours?' They answered, 'Ye speak truly; take him and

lead him away to fill up the measure of your damnation.' This said, they forthwith vanished, and two wicked spirits arose, having in their hands ploughshares, and one of them struck me on the head, and the other on the foot. And these ploughshares are now with great torment creeping into the inward parts of my body, and as soon as they meet I shall die, and the devils being ready to snatch me away, I shall be dragged into the dungeons of hell."

Thus spoke that wretch in his despair, and soon after died, and now in vain suffers in eternal torments that penance which he failed to suffer for a short time with the fruits of forgiveness. Of whom it is manifest, that (as the blessed Pope Gregory writes of certain persons) he did not see these things for his own sake, since they did not avail him, but for the sake of others, who, knowing of his end, should be afraid to put off the time of repentance, whilst they have leisure, lest, being prevented by sudden death, they should perish impenitent. And whereas he saw diverse books laid before him by the good and evil spirits, this was done by Divine dispensation, that we may keep in mind that our deeds and thoughts are not scattered to the winds, but are all kept to be examined by the Supreme Judge, and will in the end be shown us either by friendly angels or by the enemy. And whereas the angels first drew forth a white book, and then the devils a black one; the former a very small one, the latter one very great; it is to be observed, that in his first years he did some good actions, all which he nevertheless obscured by the evil actions of his youth. If, contrarywise, he had taken care in his youth to correct the errors of his boyhood, and by well-doing to put them away from the sight of God, he might have been admitted to the fellowship of those of whom the Psalm says, "Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." This story, as I learned it of the venerable Bishop Pechthelm, I have thought good to set forth plainly, for the salvation of such as shall read or hear it.

Chap. XIV.

How another in like manner, being at the point of death, saw the place of punishment appointed for him in Hell.

I myself knew a brother, would to God I had not known him, whose name I could mention if it were of any avail, dwelling in a famous monastery, but himself living infamously. He was oftentimes rebuked by the brethren and elders of the place, and admonished to be converted to a more chastened life; and though he would not give ear to them, they bore with him long and patiently, on account of their need of his outward service, for he was a cunning artificer. But he was much given to drunkenness, and other pleasures of a careless life, and more used to stop in his workshop day and night, than to go to church to sing and pray and hear the Word of life with the brethren. For which reason it befell him according to the saying, that he who will not willingly humble himself and enter the gate of the church must needs be led against his will into the gate of Hell, being damned. For he falling sick, and being brought to extremity, called the brethren, and with much lamentation, like one damned, began to tell them, that he saw Hell opened, and Satan sunk in the depths thereof; and Caiaphas, with the others that slew our Lord, hard by him, delivered up to avenging flames. "In whose neighbourhood," said he, "I see a place of eternal perdition prepared for me, miserable wretch that I am." The brothers, hearing these words, began diligently to exhort him, that he should repent even then, whilst he was still in the flesh. He answered in despair, "There is no time for me now to change my course of life, when I have myself seen my judgement passed."

Whilst uttering these words, he died without having received the saving Viaticum, and his body was buried in the farthest parts of the monastery, nor did any one dare either to say Masses or sing psalms, or even to pray for him. Oh how far asunder hath God put light from darkness! The blessed Stephen, the first martyr, being about to suffer death for the truth, saw the heavens opened, and the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God; and where he was to be after death, there he fixed the eyes of his mind, that he might die the more joyfully. But this workman, of darkened mind and life, when death was at hand, saw Hell opened, and witnessed the damnation of the Devil and his followers; he saw also, unhappy wretch! his own prison among them, to the end that, despairing of salvation, he might himself die the more miserably, but might by his perdition afford cause of salvation to the living who should hear of it. This befell of late in the province of the Bernicians, and being noised abroad far and near, inclined many to do penance for their sins without delay. Would to God that this also might come to pass through the reading of our words!

Chap. XV.

How divers churches of the Scots, at the instance of Adamnan, adopted the Catholic Easter; and how the same wrote a book about the holy places. [703 a.d.]

At this time a great part of the Scots in Ireland, and some also of the Britons in Britain, by the grace of God, adopted the reasonable and ecclesiastical time of keeping Easter. For when Adamnan, priest and abbot of the monks that were in the island of Hii, was sent by his nation on a mission to Aldfrid, king of the English, he abode some time in that province, and saw the canonical rites of the Church. Moreover, he was earnestly admonished by many of the more learned sort, not to presume to live contrary to the universal custom of the Church, either in regard to the observance of Easter, or any other ordinances whatsoever, with those few followers of his dwelling in the farthest corner of the world. Wherefore he so changed his mind, that he readily preferred those things which he had seen and heard in the English churches, to the customs which he and his people had hitherto followed. For he was a good and wise man, and excellently instructed in knowledge of the Scriptures. Returning home, he endeavoured to bring his own people that were in Hii, or that were subject to that monastery, into the way of truth, which he had embraced with all his heart; but he could not prevail. He sailed over into Ireland, and preaching to those people, and with sober words of exhortation making known to them the lawful time of Easter, he brought back many of them, and almost all that were free from the dominion of those of Hii, from the error of their fathers to the Catholic unity, and taught them to keep the lawful time of Easter.

Returning to his island, after having celebrated the canonical Easter in Ireland, he was instant in preaching the Catholic observance of the season of Easter in his monastery, yet without being able to achieve his end; and it so happened that he departed this life before the next year came round, the Divine goodness so ordaining it, that as he was a great lover of peace and unity, he should be taken away to everlasting life before he should be obliged, on the return of the season of Easter, to be at greater variance with those that would not follow him into the truth.

This same man wrote a book concerning the holy places, of great profit to many readers; his authority was the teaching and dictation of Arculf, a bishop of Gaul, who had gone to Jerusalem for the sake of the holy places; and having wandered over all the Promised Land, travelled also to Damascus, Constantinople, Alexandria, and many islands in the sea, and returning home by ship, was cast upon the western coast of Britain by a great tempest. After many adventures he came to the aforesaid servant of Christ, Adamnan, and being found to be learned in the Scriptures, and acquainted with the holy

places, was most gladly received by him and gladly heard, insomuch that whatsoever he said that he had seen worthy of remembrance in the holy places, Adamnan straightway set himself to commit to writing. Thus he composed a work, as I have said, profitable to many, and chiefly to those who, being far removed from those places where the patriarchs and Apostles lived, know no more of them than what they have learnt by reading. Adamnan presented this book to King Aldfrid, and through his bounty it came to be read by lesser persons. The writer thereof was also rewarded by him with many gifts and sent back into his country. I believe it will be of advantage to our readers if we collect some passages from his writings, and insert them in this our History.

Chap. XVI.

The account given in the aforesaid book of the place of our Lord's Nativity, Passion, and Resurrection.

He wrote concerning the place of the Nativity of our Lord, after this manner: "Bethlehem, the city of David, is situated on a narrow ridge, encompassed on all sides with valleys, being a mile in length from west to east, and having a low wall without towers, built along the edge of the level summit. In the eastern corner thereof is a sort of natural half cave, the outward part whereof is said to have been the place where our Lord was born; the inner is called the manger of our Lord. This cave within is all covered with rich marble, and over the particular spot where our Lord is said to have been born, stands the great church of St. Mary." He likewise wrote about the place of His Passion and Resurrection in this manner: "Entering the city of Jerusalem on the north side, the first place to be visited, according to the disposition of the streets, is the church of Constantine, called the Martyrium. It was built by the Emperor Constantine, in a royal and magnificent manner, because the Cross of our Lord was said to have been found there by his mother Helena. Thence, to the westward, is seen the church of Golgotha, in which is also to be found the rock which once bore the Cross to which the Lord's body was nailed, and now it upholds a large silver cross, having a great brazen wheel with lamps hanging over it. Under the place of our Lord's Cross, a crypt is hewn out of the rock, in which the Sacrifice is offered on an altar for the dead that are held in honour, their bodies remaining meanwhile in the street. To the westward of this church is the round church of the Anastasis or Resurrection of our Lord, encompassed with three walls, and supported by twelve columns. Between each of the walls is a broad passage, which contains three altars at three different points of the middle wall; to the south, the north, and the west. It has eight doors or entrances in a straight line through the three walls; four whereof face the south-east, and four the east. In the midst of it is the round tomb of our Lord cut out of the rock, the top of of which a man standing within can touch with his hand; on the east is the entrance, against which that great stone was set. To this day the tomb bears the marks of the iron tools within, but on the outside it is all covered with marble to the very top of the roof, which is adorned with gold, and bears a large golden cross. In the north part of the tomb the sepulchre of our Lord is hewn out of the same rock, seven feet in length, and three hand-breadths above the floor; the entrance being on the south side, where twelve lamps burn day and night, four within the sepulchre, and eight above on the edge of the right side. The stone that was set at the entrance to the tomb is now cleft in two; nevertheless, the lesser part of it stands as an altar of hewn stone before the door of the tomb; the greater part is set up as another altar, four-cornered, at the east end of the same church,

and is covered with linen cloths. The colour of the said tomb and sepulchre is white and red mingled together.”

Chap. XVII.

What he likewise wrote of the place of our Lord's Ascension, and the tombs of the patriarchs.

Concerning the place of our Lord's Ascension, the aforesaid author writes thus. "The Mount of Olives is equal in height to Mount Sion, but exceeds it in breadth and length; it bears few trees besides vines and olives, and is fruitful in wheat and barley, for the nature of that soil is not such as to yield thickets, but grass and flowers. On the very top of it, where our Lord ascended into heaven, is a large round church, having round about it three chapels with vaulted roofs. For the inner building could not be vaulted and roofed, by reason of the passage of our Lord's Body; but it has an altar on the east side, sheltered by a narrow roof. In the midst of it are to be seen the last Footprints of our Lord, the place where He ascended being open to the sky; and though the earth is daily carried away by believers, yet still it remains, and retains the same appearance, being marked by the impression of the Feet. Round about these lies a brazen wheel, as high as a man's neck, having an entrance from the west, with a great lamp hanging above it on a pulley and burning night and day. In the western part of the same church are eight windows; and as many lamps, hanging opposite to them by cords, shine through the glass as far as Jerusalem; and the light thereof is said to thrill the hearts of the beholders with a certain zeal and compunction. Every year, on the day of the Ascension of our Lord, when Mass is ended, a strong blast of wind is wont to come down, and to cast to the ground all that are in the church."

Of the situation of Hebron, and the tombs of the fathers, he writes thus. "Hebron, once a habitation and the chief city of David's kingdom, now only showing by its ruins what it then was, has, one furlong to the east of it, a double cave in the valley, where the sepulchres of the patriarchs are encompassed with a wall four-square, their heads lying to the north. Each of the tombs is covered with a single stone, hewn like the stones of a church, and of a white colour, for the three patriarchs. Adam's is of meaner and poorer workmanship, and he lies not far from them at the farthest end of the northern part of that wall. There are also some poorer and smaller monuments of the three women. The hill Mamre is a mile from these tombs, and is covered with grass and flowers, having a level plain on the top. In the northern part of it, the trunk of Abraham's oak, being twice as high as a man, is enclosed in a church."

Thus much, gathered from the works of the aforesaid writer, according to the sense of his words, but more briefly and in fewer words, we have thought fit to insert in our History for the profit of readers. Whosoever desires to know more of the contents of that book, may seek it either in the book itself, or in that abridgement which we have lately made from it.

Chap. XVIII.

How the South Saxons received Eadbert and Eolla, and the West Saxons, Daniel and Aldhelm, for their bishops; and of the writings of the same Aldhelm. [705 a.d.]

In the year of our Lord 705, Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, died before the end of the twentieth year of his reign. His son Osred, a boy about eight years of age, succeeding him in the throne, reigned eleven years. In the beginning of his reign, Haedde, bishop of the West Saxons, departed to the heavenly life; for he was a good man and a just, and his life and doctrine as a bishop were guided rather by his innate love of virtue, than by what he had gained from books. The most reverend bishop, Pechthelm, of whom we shall speak hereafter in the proper place, and who while still deacon or monk was for a long time with his successor Aldhelm, was wont to relate that many miracles of healing have been wrought in the place where he died, through the merit of his sanctity; and that the men of that province used to carry the dust thence for the sick, and put it into water, and the drinking thereof, or sprinkling with it, brought health to many sick men and beasts; so that the holy dust being frequently carried away, a great hole was made there.

Upon his death, the bishopric of that province was divided into two dioceses. One of them was given to Daniel, which he governs to this day; the other to Aldhelm, wherein he presided most vigorously four years; both of them were fully instructed, as well in matters touching the Church as in the knowledge of the Scriptures. Aldhelm, when he was as yet only a priest and abbot of the monastery which is called the city of Maildufus, by order of a synod of his own nation, wrote a notable book against the error of the Britons, in not celebrating Easter at the due time, and in doing divers other things contrary to the purity of doctrine and the peace of the church; and through the reading of this book many of the Britons, who were subject to the West Saxons, were led by him to adopt the Catholic celebration of our Lord's Paschal Feast. He likewise wrote a famous book on Virginity, which, after the example of Sedulius, he composed in twofold form, in hexameters and in prose. He wrote some other books, being a man most instructed in all respects, for he had a polished style, and was, as I have said, of marvellous learning both in liberal and ecclesiastical studies. On his death, Forthere was made bishop in his stead, and is living at this time, being likewise a man very learned in the Holy Scriptures.

Whilst they administered the bishopric, it was determined by a synodal decree, that the province of the South Saxons, which till that time belonged to the diocese of the city of Winchester, where Daniel then presided, should itself have an episcopal see, and a bishop of its own. Eadbert, at that time abbot of the monastery of Bishop Wilfrid, of blessed memory, called

Selaeseu, was consecrated their first bishop. On his death, Eolla succeeded to the office of bishop. He also died some years ago, and the bishopric has been vacant to this day.

Chap. XIX.

How Coinred, king of the Mercians, and Offa, king of the East Saxons, ended their days at Rome, in the monastic habit; and of the life and death of Bishop Wilfrid. [709 a.d.]

In the fourth year of the reign of Osred, Coenred, who had for some time nobly governed the kingdom of the Mercians, much more nobly quitted the sceptre of his kingdom. For he went to Rome, and there receiving the tonsure and becoming a monk, when Constantine was pope, he continued to his last hour in prayer and fasting and alms-deeds at the threshold of the Apostles. He was succeeded in the throne by Ceolred, the son of Ethelred, who had governed the kingdom before Coenred. With him went the son of Sighere, the king of the East Saxons whom we mentioned before, by name Offa, a youth of a most pleasing age and comeliness, and greatly desired by all his nation to have and to hold the sceptre of the kingdom. He, with like devotion, quitted wife, and lands, and kindred and country, for Christ and for the Gospel, that he might “receive an hundred-fold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting.” He also, when they came to the holy places at Rome, received the tonsure, and ending his life in the monastic habit, attained to the vision of the blessed Apostles in Heaven, as he had long desired.

The same year that they departed from Britain, the great bishop, Wilfrid, ended his days in the province called Inundalum, after he had been bishop forty-five years. His body, being laid in a coffin, was carried to his monastery, which is called Inhrypum, and buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, with the honour due to so great a prelate. Concerning whose manner of life, let us now turn back, and briefly make mention of the things which were done. Being a boy of a good disposition, and virtuous beyond his years, he conducted himself so modestly and discreetly in all points, that he was deservedly beloved, respected, and cherished by his elders as one of themselves. At fourteen years of age he chose rather the monastic than the secular life; which, when he had signified to his father, for his mother was dead, he readily consented to his godly wishes and desires, and advised him to persist in that wholesome purpose. Wherefore he came to the isle of Lindisfarne, and there giving himself to the service of the monks, he strove diligently to learn and to practise those things which belong to monastic purity and piety; and being of a ready wit, he speedily learned the psalms and some other books, having not yet received the tonsure, but being in no small measure marked by those virtues of humility and obedience which are more important than the tonsure; for which reason he was justly loved by his elders and his equals. Having served God some years in that monastery, and being a youth of a good understanding, he perceived that the way of virtue delivered by the Scots was in no wise perfect, and he resolved to go to Rome, to see

what ecclesiastical or monastic rites were in use at the Apostolic see. When he told the brethren, they commended his design, and advised him to carry out that which he purposed. He forthwith went to Queen Eanfled, for he was known to her, and it was by her counsel and support that he had been admitted into the aforesaid monastery, and he told her of his desire to visit the threshold of the blessed Apostles. She, being pleased with the youth's good purpose, sent him into Kent, to King Earconbert, who was her uncle's son, requesting that he would send him to Rome in an honourable manner. At that time, Honorius, one of the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory, a man very highly instructed in ecclesiastical learning, was archbishop there. When he had tarried there for a space, and, being a youth of an active spirit, was diligently applying himself to learn those things which came under his notice, another youth, called Biscop, surnamed Benedict, of the English nobility, arrived there, being likewise desirous to go to Rome, of whom we have before made mention.

The king gave him Wilfrid for a companion, and bade Wilfrid conduct him to Rome. When they came to Lyons, Wilfrid was detained there by Dalfinus, the bishop of that city; but Benedict hastened on to Rome. For the bishop was delighted with the youth's prudent discourse, the grace of his comely countenance, his eager activity, and the consistency and maturity of his thoughts; for which reason he plentifully supplied him and his companions with all necessaries, as long as they stayed with him; and further offered, if he would have it, to commit to him the government of no small part of Gaul, to give him a maiden daughter of his own brother to wife, and to regard him always as his adopted son. But Wilfrid thanked him for the loving-kindness which he was pleased to show to a stranger, and answered, that he had resolved upon another course of life, and for that reason had left his country and set out for Rome.

Hereupon the bishop sent him to Rome, furnishing him with a guide and supplying plenty of all things requisite for his journey, earnestly requesting that he would come that way, when he returned into his own country. Wilfrid arriving at Rome, and daily giving himself with all earnestness to prayer and the study of ecclesiastical matters, as he had purposed in his mind, gained the friendship of the most holy and learned Boniface, the archdeacon, who was also counsellor to the Apostolic Pope, by whose instruction he learned in their order the four Gospels, and the true computation of Easter; and many other things appertaining to ecclesiastical discipline, which he could not learn in his own country, he acquired from the teaching of that same master. When he had spent some months there, in successful study, he returned into Gaul, to Dalfinus; and having stayed with him three years, received from him the tonsure, and Dalfinus esteemed him so highly in love that he had thoughts of making him his heir; but this was prevented by the bishop's cruel death, and Wilfrid was reserved to be a bishop of his own, that is, the English, nation. For Queen Baldhild sent soldiers with orders to put the bishop to death; whom

Wilfrid, as his clerk, attended to the place where he was to be beheaded, being very desirous, though the bishop strongly opposed it, to die with him; but the executioners, understanding that he was a stranger, and of the English nation, spared him, and would not put him to death with his bishop.

Returning to Britain, he won the friendship of King Alchfrid, who had learnt to follow always and love the catholic rules of the Church; and therefore finding him to be a Catholic, he gave him presently land of ten families at the place called Stanford; and not long after, the monastery, with land of thirty families, at the place called Inhrypum; which place he had formerly given to those that followed the doctrine of the Scots, to build a monastery there. But, forasmuch as they afterwards, being given the choice, had rather quit the place than adopt the Catholic Easter and other canonical rites, according to the custom of the Roman Apostolic Church, he gave the same to him whom he found to be instructed in better discipline and better customs.

At the same time, by the said king's command, he was ordained priest in the same monastery, by Agilbert, bishop of the Gewissae above-mentioned, the king being desirous that a man of so much learning and piety should attend him constantly as his special priest and teacher; and not long after, when the Scottish sect had been exposed and banished, as was said above, he, with the advice and consent of his father Oswy, sent him into Gaul, to be consecrated as his bishop, when he was about thirty years of age, the same Agilbert being then bishop of the city of Paris. Eleven other bishops met at the consecration of the new bishop, and that function was most honourably performed. Whilst he yet tarried beyond the sea, the holy man, Ceadda, was consecrated bishop of York by command of King Oswy, as has been said above; and having nobly ruled that church three years, he retired to take charge of his monastery of Laestingaeu, and Wilfrid was made bishop of all the province of the Northumbrians.

Afterwards, in the reign of Egfrid, he was expelled from his bishopric, and others were consecrated bishops in his stead, of whom mention has been made above. Designing to go to Rome, to plead his cause before the Apostolic Pope, he took ship, and was driven by a west wind into Frisland, and honourably received by that barbarous people and their King Aldgils, to whom he preached Christ, and he instructed many thousands of them in the Word of truth, washing them from the defilement of their sins in the Saviour's font. Thus he began there the work of the Gospel which was afterwards finished with great devotion by the most reverend bishop of Christ, Wilbrord. Having spent the winter there successfully among this new people of God, he set out again on his way to Rome, where his cause being tried before Pope Agatho and many bishops, he was by the judgement of them all acquitted of all blame, and declared worthy of his bishopric.

At the same time, the said Pope Agatho assembling a synod at Rome, of

one hundred and twenty-five bishops, against those who asserted that there was only one will and operation in our Lord and Saviour, ordered Wilfrid also to be summoned, and, sitting among the bishops, to declare his own faith and the faith of the province or island whence he came; and he and his people being found orthodox in their faith, it was thought fit to record the same among the acts of that synod, which was done in in this manner: “Wilfrid, the beloved of God, bishop of the city of York, appealing to the Apostolic see, and being by that authority acquitted of every thing, whether specified against him or not, and being appointed to sit in judgement with one hundred and twenty-five other bishops in the synod, made confession of the true and catholic faith, and confirmed the same with his subscription in the name of all the northern part of Britain and Ireland, and the islands inhabited by the nations of the English and Britons, as also by the Scots and Picts.”

After this, returning into Britain, he converted the province of the South Saxons from their idolatrous worship to the faith of Christ. He also sent ministers of the Word to the Isle of Wight; and in the second year of Aldfrid, who reigned after Egfrid, was restored to his see and bishopric by that king’s invitation. Nevertheless, five years after, being again accused, he was deprived of his bishopric by the same king and certain bishops. Coming to Rome, he was allowed to make his defence in the presence of his accusers, before a number of bishops and the Apostolic Pope John. It was shown by the judgement of them all, that his accusers had in part laid false accusations to his charge; and the aforesaid Pope wrote to the kings of the English, Ethelred and Aldfrid, to cause him to be restored to his bishopric, because he had been unjustly condemned.

His acquittal was much forwarded by the reading of the acts of the synod of Pope Agatho, of blessed memory, which had been formerly held, when Wilfrid was in Rome and sat in council among the bishops, as has been said before. For the acts of that synod being, as the case required, read, by order of the Apostolic Pope, before the nobility and a great number of the people for some days, they came to the place where it was written, “Wilfrid, the beloved of God, bishop of the city of York, appealing to the Apostolic see, and being by that authority acquitted of everything, whether specified against him or not,” and the rest as above stated. This being read, the hearers were amazed, and the reader ceasing, they began to ask of one another, who that Bishop Wilfrid was. Then Boniface, the Pope’s counsellor, and many others, who had seen him there in the days of Pope Agatho, said that he was the same bishop that lately came to Rome, to be tried by the Apostolic see, being accused by his people, and “who, said they, having long since come here upon the like accusation, the cause and contention of both parties being heard and examined, was proved by Pope Agatho, of blessed memory, to have been wrongfully expelled from his bishopric, and was held in such honour by him, that he commanded him to sit in the council of bishops which he had assembled, as a man of untainted faith and an upright mind.” This being

heard, the Pope and all the rest said, that a man of so great authority, who had held the office of a bishop for nearly forty years, ought by no means to be condemned, but being altogether cleared of the faults laid to his charge, should return home with honour.

When he came to Gaul, on his way back to Britain, on a sudden he fell sick, and the sickness increasing, he was so weighed down by it, that he could not ride, but was carried in his bed by the hands of his servants. Being thus come to the city of Maeldum, in Gaul, he lay four days and nights, as if he had been dead, and only by his faint breathing showed that he had any life in him. Having continued thus four days, without meat or drink, without speech or hearing, at length, on the fifth day, at daybreak, as it were awakening out of a deep sleep, he raised himself and sat up, and opening his eyes, saw round about him a company of brethren singing psalms and weeping. Sighing gently, he asked where Acca, the priest, was. This man, straightway being called, came in, and seeing him somewhat recovered and able to speak, knelt down, and gave thanks to God, with all the brethren there present. When they had sat awhile and begun to discourse, with great awe, of the judgements of heaven, the bishop bade the rest go out for a time, and spoke to the priest, Acca, after this manner:

“A dread vision has even now appeared to me, which I would have you hear and keep secret, till I know what God will please to do with me. There stood by me a certain one, glorious in white raiment, and he told me that he was Michael, the Archangel, and said, ‘I am sent to call you back from death: for the Lord has granted you life, through the prayers and tears of your disciples and brethren, and the intercession of His Blessed Mother Mary, of perpetual virginity; wherefore I tell you, that you shall now recover from this sickness; but be ready, for I will return and visit you at the end of four years. And when you come into your country, you shall recover the greater part of the possessions that have been taken from you, and shall end your days in peace and quiet.’” The bishop accordingly recovered, whereat all men rejoiced and gave thanks to God, and setting forward on his journey, he arrived in Britain.

Having read the letters which he brought from the Apostolic Pope, Bertwald, the archbishop, and Ethelred, sometime king, but then abbot, readily took his part; for the said Ethelred, calling to him Coenred, whom he had made king in his own stead, begged him to be friends with Wilfrid, in which request he prevailed; nevertheless Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, disdained to receive him. But he died soon after, and so it came to pass that, during the reign of his son Osred, when a synod was assembled before long by the river Nidd, after some contention on both sides, at length, by the consent of all, he was restored to the government of his own church; and thus he lived in peace four years, till the day of his death. He died in his monastery, which he had in the province of Undalum, under the government of the Abbot Cuthbald; and by the ministry of the brethren, he was carried to

his first monastery which is called Inhrypum, and buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, hard by the altar on the south side, as has been mentioned above, and this epitaph was written over him:

“Here rests the body of the great Bishop Wilfrid, who, for love of piety, built these courts and consecrated them with the noble name of Peter, to whom Christ, the Judge of all the earth, gave the keys of Heaven. And devoutly he clothed them with gold and Tyrian purple; yea, and he placed here the trophy of the Cross, of shining ore, uplifted high; moreover he caused the four books of the Gospel to be written in gold in their order, and he gave a case meet for them of ruddy gold. And he also brought the holy season of Easter, returning in its course, to accord with the true teaching of the catholic rule which the Fathers fixed, and, banishing all doubt and error, gave his nation sure guidance in their worship. And in this place he gathered a great throng of monks, and with all diligence safeguarded the precepts which the Fathers’ rule enjoined. And long time sore vexed by many a peril at home and abroad, when he had held the office of a bishop forty-five years, he passed away and with joy departed to the heavenly kingdom. Grant, O Jesus, that the flock may follow in the path of the shepherd.”

Chap. XX.

How Albinus succeeded to the godly Abbot Hadrian, and Acca to Bishop Wilfrid. [709 a.d.]

The next year after the death of the aforesaid father, which was the fifth year of King Osred, the most reverend father, Abbot Hadrian, fellow labourer in the Word of God with Bishop Theodore of blessed memory, died, and was buried in the church of the Blessed Mother of God, in his own monastery, this being the forty-first year after he was sent by Pope Vitalian with Theodore, and the thirty-ninth after his arrival in England. Among other proofs of his learning, as well as Theodore's, there is this testimony, that Albinus, his disciple, who succeeded him in the government of his monastery, was so well instructed in literary studies, that he had no small knowledge of the Greek tongue, and knew the Latin as well as the English, which was his native language.

Acca, his priest, succeeded Wilfrid in the bishopric of the church of Hagustald, being likewise a man of zeal and great in noble works in the sight of God and man. He enriched the structure of his church, which is dedicated in honour of the blessed Apostle Andrew with manifold adornments and marvellous workmanship. For he gave all diligence, as he does to this day, to procure relics of the blessed Apostles and martyrs of Christ from all parts, and to raise altars in their honour in separate side-chapels built for the purpose within the walls of the same church. Besides which, he industriously gathered the histories of their martyrdom, together with other ecclesiastical writings, and erected there a large and noble library. He likewise carefully provided holy vessels, lamps, and other such things as appertain to the adorning of the house of God. He in like manner invited to him a notable singer called Maban, who had been taught to sing by the successors of the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory in Kent, to instruct himself and his clergy, and kept him twelve years, to the end that he might teach such Church music as they did not know, and by his teaching restore to its former state that which was corrupted either by long use, or through neglect. For Bishop Acca himself was a most skilful singer, as well as most learned in Holy Writ, sound in the confession of the catholic faith, and well versed in the rules of ecclesiastical custom; nor does he cease to walk after this manner, till he receive the rewards of his pious devotion. For he was brought up from boyhood and instructed among the clergy of the most holy and beloved of God, Bosa, bishop of York. Afterwards, coming to Bishop Wilfrid in the hope of a better plan of life, he spent the rest of his days in attendance on him till that bishop's death, and going with him to Rome, learned there many profitable things concerning the ordinances of the Holy Church, which he could not have learned in his own country.

Chap. XXI.

How the Abbot Ceolfrid sent master-builders to the King of the Picts to build a church, and with them an epistle concerning the Catholic Easter and the Tonsure. [710 a.d.]

At that time, Naiton, King of the Picts, who inhabit the northern parts of Britain, taught by frequent meditation on the ecclesiastical writings, renounced the error whereby he and his nation had been holden till then, touching the observance of Easter, and brought himself and all his people to celebrate the catholic time of our Lord's Resurrection. To the end that he might bring this to pass with the more ease and greater authority, he sought aid from the English, whom he knew to have long since framed their religion after the example of the holy Roman Apostolic Church. Accordingly, he sent messengers to the venerable Ceolfrid, abbot of the monastery of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, which stands at the mouth of the river Wear, and near the river Tyne, at the place called Ingyruum, which he gloriously governed after Benedict, of whom we have before spoken; desiring, that he would send him a letter of exhortation, by the help of which he might the better confute those that presumed to keep Easter out of the due time; as also concerning the form and manner of tonsure whereby the clergy should be distinguished, notwithstanding that he himself had no small knowledge of these things. He also prayed to have master-builders sent him to build a church of stone in his nation after the Roman manner, promising to dedicate the same in honour of the blessed chief of the Apostles. Moreover, he and all his people, he said, would always follow the custom of the holy Roman Apostolic Church, in so far as men so distant from the speech and nation of the Romans could learn it. The most reverend Abbot Ceolfrid favourably receiving his godly desires and requests, sent the builders he desired, and likewise the following letter:

"To the most excellent lord, and glorious King Naiton, Abbot Ceolfrid, greeting in the Lord. We most readily and willingly endeavour, according to your desire, to make known to you the catholic observance of holy Easter, according to what we have learned of the Apostolic see, even as you, most devout king, in your godly zeal, have requested of us. For we know, that whensoever the lords of this world labour to learn, and to teach and to guard the truth, it is a gift of God to his Holy Church. For a certain profane writer has most truly said, that the world would be most happy if either kings were philosophers, or philosophers were kings. Now if a man of this world could judge truly of the philosophy of this world, and form a right choice concerning the state of this world, how much more is it to be desired, and most earnestly to be prayed for by such as are citizens of the heavenly country, and strangers and pilgrims in this world, that the more powerful any

are in the world the more they may strive to hearken to the commands of Him who is the Supreme Judge, and by their example and authority may teach those that are committed to their charge, to keep the same, together with themselves.

“There are then three rules given in the Sacred Writings, whereby the time of keeping Easter has been appointed for us and may in no wise be changed by any authority of man; two whereof are divinely established in the law of Moses; the third is added in the Gospel by reason of the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord. For the law enjoined, that the Passover should be kept in the first month of the year, and the third week of that month, that is, from the fifteenth day to the one-and-twentieth. It is added, by Apostolic institution, from the Gospel, that we are to wait for the Lord’s day in that third week, and to keep the beginning of the Paschal season on the same. Which threefold rule whosoever shall rightly observe, will never err in fixing the Paschal feast. But if you desire to be more plainly and fully informed in all these particulars, it is written in Exodus, where the people of Israel, being about to be delivered out of Egypt, are commanded to keep the first Passover, that the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying, ‘This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house.’ And a little after, ‘And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.’ By which words it most plainly appears, that in the Paschal observance, though mention is made of the fourteenth day, yet it is not commanded that the Passover be kept on that day; but on the evening of the fourteenth day, that is, when the fifteenth moon, which is the beginning of the third week, appears in the sky, it is commanded that the lamb be killed; and that it was the night of the fifteenth moon, when the Egyptians were smitten and Israel was redeemed from long captivity. He says, ‘Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread.’ By which words all the third week of that same first month is appointed to be a solemn feast. But lest we should think that those same seven days were to be reckoned from the fourteenth to the twentieth, He forthwith adds, ‘Even the first day ye shall put away leaven out of your houses; for whosoever eateth leavened bread, from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel;’ and so on, till he says, ‘For in this selfsame day I will bring your army out of the land of Egypt.’

“Thus he calls that the first day of unleavened bread, in which he was to bring their army out of Egypt. Now it is evident, that they were not brought out of Egypt on the fourteenth day, in the evening whereof the lamb was killed, and which is properly called the Passover or Phase, but on the fifteenth day, as is most plainly written in the book of Numbers: ‘and they departed from Rameses on the fifteenth day of the first month, on the morrow after the

Passover the Israelites went out with an high hand.’ Thus the seven days of unleavened bread, on the first whereof the people of the Lord were brought out of Egypt, are to be reckoned from the beginning of the third week, as has been said, that is, from the fifteenth day of the first month, till the end of the one-and-twentieth of the same month. But the fourteenth day is named apart from this number, by the title of the Passover, as is plainly shown by that which follows in Exodus: where, after it is said, ‘For in this self-same day I will bring your army out of the land of Egypt;’ it is forthwith added, ‘And ye shall observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one-and-twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses.’ Now, who is there that does not perceive, that there are not only seven days, but rather eight, from the fourteenth to the one-and-twentieth, if the fourteenth be also reckoned in the number? But if, as appears by diligent study of the truth of the Scriptures, we reckon from the evening of the fourteenth day to the evening of the one-and-twentieth, we shall certainly find, that, while the Paschal feast begins on the evening of the fourteenth day, yet the whole sacred solemnity contains no more than only seven nights and as many days. Wherefore the rule which we laid down is proved to be true, when we said that the Paschal season is to be celebrated in the first month of the year, and the third week of the same. For it is in truth the third week, because it begins on the evening of the fourteenth day, and ends on the evening of the one-and-twentieth.

“But since Christ our Passover is sacrificed, and has made the Lord’s day, which among the ancients was called the first day of the week, a solemn day to us for the joy of His Resurrection, the Apostolic tradition has included it in the Paschal festival; yet has decreed that the time of the legal Passover be in no wise anticipated or diminished; but rather ordains, that according to the precept of the law, that same first month of the year, and the fourteenth day of the same, and the evening thereof be awaited. And when this day should chance to fall on a Saturday, every man should take to him a lamb, according to the house of his fathers, a lamb for an house, and he should kill it in the evening, that is, that all the Churches throughout the world, making one Catholic Church, should provide Bread and Wine for the Mystery of the Flesh and Blood of the spotless Lamb ‘that hath taken away the sins of the world;’ and after a fitting solemn service of lessons and prayers and Paschal ceremonies, they should offer up these to the Lord, in hope of redemption to come. For this is that same night in which the people of Israel were delivered out of Egypt by the blood of the lamb; this is the same in which all the people of God were, by Christ’s Resurrection, set free from eternal death. Then, in the morning, when the Lord’s day dawns, they should celebrate the first day of the Paschal festival; for that is the day on which our Lord made known the glory of His Resurrection to His disciples, to their manifold joy at the merciful revelation. The same is the first day of unleavened bread, concerning which it

is plainly written in Leviticus, 'In the fourteenth day of the first month, at even, is the Lord's Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord; seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation.'

"If therefore it could be that the Lord's day should always happen on the fifteenth day of the first month, that is, on the fifteenth moon, we might always celebrate the Passover at one and the same time with the ancient people of God, though the nature of the mystery be different, as we do it with one and the same faith. But inasmuch as the day of the week does not keep pace exactly with the moon, the Apostolic tradition, which was preached at Rome by the blessed Peter, and confirmed at Alexandria by Mark the Evangelist, his interpreter, appointed that when the first month was come, and in it the evening of the fourteenth day, we should also wait for the Lord's day, between the fifteenth and the one-and-twentieth day of the same month. For on whichever of those days it shall fall, Easter will be rightly kept on the same; seeing that it is one of those seven days on which the feast of unleavened bread is commanded to be kept. Thus it comes to pass that our Easter never falls either before or after the third week of the first month, but has for its observance either the whole of it, to wit, the seven days of unleavened bread appointed by the law, or at least some of them. For though it comprises but one of them, that is, the seventh, which the Scripture so highly commends, saying, 'But the seventh day shall be a more holy convocation, ye shall do no servile work therein,' none can lay it to our charge, that we do not rightly keep Easter Sunday, which we received from the Gospel, in the third week of the first month, as the Law prescribes.

"The catholic reason of this observance being thus explained, the unreasonable error, on the other hand, of those who, without any necessity, presume either to anticipate, or to go beyond the term appointed in the Law, is manifest. For they that think Easter Sunday is to be observed from the fourteenth day of the first month till the twentieth moon, anticipate the time prescribed in the law, without any necessary reason; for when they begin to celebrate the vigil of the holy night from the evening of the thirteenth day, it is plain that they make that day the beginning of their Easter, whereof they find no mention in the commandment of the Law; and when they avoid celebrating our Lord's Easter on the one-and-twentieth day of the month, it is surely manifest that they wholly exclude that day from their solemnity, which the Law many times commends to be observed as a greater festival than the rest; and thus, perverting the proper order, they sometimes keep Easter Day entirely in the second week, and never place it on the seventh day of the third week. And again, they who think that Easter is to be kept from the sixteenth day of the said month till the two-and-twentieth no less erroneously, though on the other side, deviate from the right way of truth, and as it were avoiding shipwreck on Scylla, they fall into the whirlpool of Charybdis to be drowned. For when they teach that Easter is to be begun at the rising of the sixteenth

moon of the first month, that is, from the evening of the fifteenth day, it is certain that they altogether exclude from their solemnity the fourteenth day of the same month, which the Law first and chiefly commends; so that they scarce touch the evening of the fifteenth day, on which the people of God were redeemed from Egyptian bondage, and on which our Lord, by His Blood, rescued the world from the darkness of sin, and on which being also buried, He gave us the hope of a blessed rest after death.

“And these men, receiving in themselves the recompense of their error, when they place Easter Sunday on the twenty-second day of the month, openly transgress and do violence to the term of Easter appointed by the Law, seeing that they begin Easter on the evening of that day in which the Law commanded it to be completed and brought to an end; and appoint that to be the first day of Easter, whereof no mention is any where found in the Law, to wit, the first of the fourth week. And both sorts are mistaken, not only in fixing and computing the moon’s age, but also sometimes in finding the first month; but this controversy is longer than can be or ought to be contained in this letter. I will only say thus much, that by the vernal equinox, it may always be found, without the chance of an error, which must be the first month of the year, according to the lunar computation, and which the last. But the equinox, according to the opinion of all the Eastern nations, and particularly of the Egyptians, who surpass all other learned men in calculation, falls on the twenty-first day of March, as we also prove by horological observation. Whatsoever moon therefore is at the full before the equinox, being on the fourteenth or fifteenth day, the same belongs to the last month of the foregoing year, and consequently is not meet for the celebration of Easter; but that moon which is full after the equinox, or at the very time of the equinox, belongs to the first month, and on that day, without a doubt, we must understand that the ancients were wont to celebrate the Passover; and that we also ought to keep Easter when the Sunday comes. And that this must be so, there is this cogent reason. It is written in Genesis, ‘And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night.’ Or, as another edition has it, ‘The greater light to begin the day, and the lesser to begin the night.’ As, therefore, the sun, coming forth from the midst of the east, fixed the vernal equinox by his rising, and afterwards the moon at the full, when the sun set in the evening, followed from the midst of the east; so every year the same first lunar month must be observed in the like order, so that its full moon must not be before the equinox; but either on the very day of the equinox, as it was in the beginning, or after it is past. But if the full moon shall happen to be but one day before the time of the equinox, the aforesaid reason proves that such moon is not to be assigned to the first month of the new year, but rather to the last of the preceding, and that it is therefore not meet for the celebration of the Paschal festival.

“Now if it please you likewise to hear the mystical reason in this matter, we are commanded to keep Easter in the first month of the year, which is also

called the month of new things, because we ought to celebrate the mysteries of our Lord's Resurrection and our deliverance, with the spirit of our minds renewed to the love of heavenly things. We are commanded to keep it in the third week of the same month, because Christ Himself, who had been promised before the Law, and under the Law, came with grace, in the third age of the world, to be sacrificed as our Passover; and because rising from the dead the third day after the offering of His Passion, He wished this to be called the Lord's day, and the Paschal feast of His Resurrection to be yearly celebrated on the same; because, also, we do then only truly celebrate His solemn festival, if we endeavour with Him to keep the Passover, that is, the passing from this world to the Father, by faith, hope, and charity. We are commanded to observe the full moon of the Paschal month after the vernal equinox, to the end, that the sun may first make the day longer than the night, and then the moon may show to the world her full orb of light; inasmuch as first 'the Sun of righteousness, with healing in His wings,' that is, our Lord Jesus, by the triumph of His Resurrection, dispelled all the darkness of death, and so ascending into Heaven, filled His Church, which is often signified by the name of the moon, with the light of inward grace, by sending down upon her His Spirit. Which order of our salvation the prophet had in his mind, when he said 'The sun was exalted and the moon stood in her order.'

"He, therefore, who shall contend that the full Paschal moon can happen before the equinox, disagrees with the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, in the celebration of the greatest mysteries, and agrees with those who trust that they may be saved without the grace of Christ preventing them, and who presume to teach that they might have attained to perfect righteousness, though the true Light had never by death and resurrection vanquished the darkness of the world. Thus, after the rising of the sun at the equinox, and after the full moon of the first month following in her order, that is, after the end of the fourteenth day of the same month, all which we have received by the Law to be observed, we still, as we are taught in the Gospel, wait in the third week for the Lord's day; and so, at length, we celebrate the offering of our Easter solemnity, to show that we are not, with the ancients, doing honour to the casting off of the yoke of Egyptian bondage; but that, with devout faith and love, we worship the Redemption of the whole world, which having been prefigured in the deliverance of the ancient people of God, was fulfilled in Christ's Resurrection, and that we may signify that we rejoice in the sure and certain hope of our own resurrection, which we believe will likewise happen on the Lord's day.

"Now this computation of Easter, which we set forth to you to be followed, is contained in a cycle of nineteen years, which began long since to be observed in the Church, to wit, even in the time of the Apostles, especially at Rome and in Egypt, as has been said above. But by the industry of Eusebius, who took his surname from the blessed martyr Pamphilus, it was reduced to a plainer system; insomuch that what till then used to be enjoined every year

throughout all the Churches by the Bishop of Alexandria, might, from that time forward, be most easily known by all men, the occurrence of the fourteenth moon being regularly set forth in its course. This Paschal computation, Theophilus, Bishop of Alexandria, made for the Emperor Theodosius, for a hundred years to come. Cyril also, his successor, comprised a series of ninety-five years in five cycles of nineteen years. After whom, Dionysius Exiguus added as many more, in order, after the same manner, reaching down to our own time. The expiration of these is now drawing near, but there is at the present day so great a number of calculators, that even in our Churches throughout Britain, there are many who, having learned the ancient rules of the Egyptians, can with great ease carry on the Paschal cycles for any length of time, even to five hundred and thirty-two years, if they will; after the expiration of which, all that appertains to the succession of sun and moon, month and week, returns in the same order as before. We therefore forbear to send you these same cycles of the times to come, because, desiring only to be instructed respecting the reason for the Paschal time, you show that you have enough of those catholic cycles concerning Easter.

“But having said thus much briefly and succinctly, as you required, concerning Easter, I also exhort you to take heed that the tonsure, concerning which likewise you desired me to write to you, be in accordance with the use of the Church and the Christian Faith. And we know indeed that the Apostles were not all shorn after the same manner, nor does the Catholic Church now, as it agrees in one faith, hope, and charity towards God, use one and the same form of tonsure throughout the world. Moreover, to look back to former times, to wit, the times of the patriarchs, Job, the pattern of patience, when tribulation came upon him, shaved his head, and thus made it appear that he had used, in time of prosperity, to let his hair grow. But concerning Joseph, who more than other men practised and taught chastity, humility, piety, and the other virtues, we read that he was shorn when he was to be delivered from bondage, by which it appears, that during the time of his bondage, he was in the prison with unshorn hair. Behold then how each of these men of God differed in the manner of their appearance abroad, though their inward consciences agreed in a like grace of virtue. But though we may be free to confess, that the difference of tonsure is not hurtful to those whose faith is pure towards God, and their charity sincere towards their neighbour, especially since we do not read that there was ever any controversy among the Catholic fathers about the difference of tonsure, as there has been a contention about the diversity in keeping Easter, and in matters of faith; nevertheless, among all the forms of tonsure that are to be found in the Church, or among mankind at large, I think none more meet to be followed and received by us than that which that disciple wore on his head, to whom, after his confession of Himself, our Lord said, ‘Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven.’ Nor do I think that any is more

rightly to be abhorred and detested by all the faithful, than that which that man used, to whom that same Peter, when he would have bought the grace of the Holy Ghost, said, 'Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this word.' Nor do we shave ourselves in the form of a crown only because Peter was so shorn; but because Peter was so shorn in memory of the Passion of our Lord, therefore we also, who desire to be saved by the same Passion, do with him bear the sign of the same Passion on the top of our head, which is the highest part of our body. For as all the Church, because it was made a Church by the death of Him that gave it life, is wont to bear the sign of His Holy Cross on the forehead, to the end, that it may, by the constant protection of His banner, be defended from the assaults of evil spirits, and by the frequent admonition of the same be taught, in like manner, to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts; so also it behoves those, who having either taken the vows of a monk, or having the degree of a clerk, must needs curb themselves the more strictly by continence, for the Lord's sake, to bear each one of them on his head, by the tonsure, the form of the crown of thorns which He bore on His head in His Passion, that He might bear the thorns and thistles of our sins, that is, that he might bear them away and take them from us; to the end that they may show on their foreheads that they also willingly, and readily, endure all scoffing and reproach for his sake; and that they may signify that they await always 'the crown of eternal life, which God hath promised to them that love him,' and that for the sake of attaining thereto they despise both the evil and the good of this world. But as for the tonsure which Simon Magus is said to have used, who is there of the faithful, I ask you, who does not straightway detest and reject it at the first sight of it, together with his magic? Above the forehead it does seem indeed to resemble a crown; but when you come to look at the neck, you will find the crown cut short which you thought you saw; so that you may perceive that such a use properly belongs not to Christians but to Simoniacs, such as were indeed in this life by erring men thought worthy of the glory of an everlasting crown; but in that which is to follow this life are not only deprived of all hope of a crown, but are moreover condemned to eternal punishment.

"But do not think that I have said thus much, as though I judged them worthy to be condemned who use this tonsure, if they uphold the catholic unity by their faith and works; nay, I confidently declare, that many of them have been holy men and worthy servants of God. Of which number is Adamnan, the notable abbot and priest of the followers of Columba, who, when sent on a mission by his nation to King Aldfrid, desired to see our monastery, and forasmuch as he showed wonderful wisdom, humility, and piety in his words and behaviour, I said to him among other things, when I talked with him, 'I beseech you, holy brother, how is it that you, who believe that you are advancing to the crown of life, which knows no end, wear on your head, after a fashion ill-suited to your belief, the likeness of a crown that

has an end? And if you seek the fellowship of the blessed Peter, why do you imitate the likeness of the tonsure of him whom St. Peter anathematized? and why do you not rather even now show that you choose with all your heart the fashion of him with whom you desire to live in bliss for ever.' He answered, 'Be assured, my dear brother, that though I wear the tonsure of Simon, according to the custom of my country, yet I detest and abhor with all my soul the heresy of Simon; and I desire, as far as lies in my small power, to follow the footsteps of the most blessed chief of the Apostles.' I replied, 'I verily believe it; nevertheless it is a token that you embrace in your inmost heart whatever is of Peter the Apostle, if you also observe in outward form that which you know to be his. For I think your wisdom easily discerns that it is much better to estrange from your countenance, already dedicated to God, the fashion of his countenance whom with all your heart you abhor, and of whose hideous face you would shun the sight; and, on the other hand, that it beseems you to imitate the manner of his appearance, whom you seek to have for your advocate before God, even as you desire to follow his actions and his teaching.'

"This I said at that time to Adamnan, who indeed showed how much he had profited by seeing the ordinances of our Churches, when, returning into Scotland, he afterwards by his preaching led great numbers of that nation to the catholic observance of the Paschal time; though he was not yet able to bring back to the way of the better ordinance the monks that lived in the island of Hii over whom he presided with the special authority of a superior. He would also have been mindful to amend the tonsure, if his influence had availed so far.

"But I now also admonish your wisdom, O king, that together with the nation, over which the King of kings, and Lord of lords, has placed you, you strive to observe in all points those things which are in accord with the unity of the Catholic and Apostolic Church; for so it will come to pass, that after you have held sway in a temporal kingdom, the blessed chief of the Apostles will also willingly open to you and yours with all the elect the entrance into the heavenly kingdom. The grace of the eternal King preserve you in safety, long reigning for the peace of us all, my dearly beloved son in Christ."

This letter having been read in the presence of King Naiton and many learned men, and carefully interpreted into his own language by those who could understand it, he is said to have much rejoiced at the exhortation thereof; insomuch that, rising from among his nobles that sat about him, he knelt on the ground, giving thanks to God that he had been found worthy to receive such a gift from the land of the English. "And indeed," he said, "I knew before, that this was the true celebration of Easter, but now I so fully learn the reason for observing this time, that I seem in all points to have known but little before concerning these matters. Therefore I publicly declare and protest to you that are here present, that I will for ever observe this time of Easter, together with all my nation; and I do decree that this tonsure, which

we have heard to be reasonable, shall be received by all clerks in my kingdom.” Without delay he accomplished by his royal authority what he had said. For straightway the Paschal cycles of nineteen years were sent by command of the State throughout all the provinces of the Picts to be transcribed, learned, and observed, the erroneous cycles of eighty-four years being everywhere blotted out. All the ministers of the altar and monks were shorn after the fashion of the crown; and the nation thus reformed, rejoiced, as being newly put under the guidance of Peter, the most blessed chief of the Apostles, and committed to his protection.

Chap. XXII.

How the monks of Hii, and the monasteries subject to them, began to celebrate the canonical Easter at the preaching of Egbert. [716 a.d.]

Not long after, those monks also of the Scottish nation, who lived in the isle of Hii, with the other monasteries that were subject to them, were by the Lord's doing brought to the canonical observance with regard to Easter, and the tonsure. For in the year of our Lord 716, when Osred was slain, and Coenred took upon him the government of the kingdom of the Northumbrians, the father and priest, Egbert, beloved of God, and worthy to be named with all honour, whom we have before often mentioned, came to them from Ireland, and was honourably and joyfully received. Being a most gracious teacher, and most devout in practising those things which he taught, and being willingly heard by all, by his pious and diligent exhortations, he converted them from that deep-rooted tradition of their fathers, of whom may be said those words of the Apostle, "That they had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." He taught them to celebrate the principal solemnity after the catholic and apostolic manner, as has been said, wearing on their heads the figure of an unending crown. It is manifest that this came to pass by a wonderful dispensation of the Divine goodness; to the end, that the same nation which had willingly, and without grudging, taken heed to impart to the English people that learning which it had in the knowledge of God, should afterwards, by means of the English nation, be brought, in those things which it had not, to a perfect rule of life. Even as, contrarywise, the Britons, who would not reveal to the English the knowledge which they had of the Christian faith, now, when the English people believe, and are in all points instructed in the rule of the Catholic faith, still persist in their errors, halting and turned aside from the true path, expose their heads without a crown, and keep the Feast of Christ apart from the fellowship of the Church of Christ.

The monks of Hii, at the teaching of Egbert, adopted the catholic manner of conversation, under Abbot Dunchad, about eighty years after they had sent Bishop Aidan to preach to the English nation. The man of God, Egbert, remained thirteen years in the aforesaid island, which he had thus consecrated to Christ, as it were, by a new ray of the grace of fellowship and peace in the Church; and in the year of our Lord 729, in which Easter was celebrated on the 24th of April, when he had celebrated the solemnity of the Mass, in memory of the Resurrection of our Lord, that same day he departed to the Lord and thus finished, or rather never ceases endlessly to celebrate, with our Lord, and the Apostles, and the other citizens of heaven, the joy of that greatest festival, which he had begun with the brethren, whom he had converted to the grace of unity. And it was a wonderful dispensation of the Divine Providence, that the venerable man passed from this world to the

Father, not only at Easter, but also when Easter was celebrated on that day, on which it had never been wont to be celebrated in those parts. The brethren rejoiced in the sure and catholic knowledge of the time of Easter, and were glad in that their father, by whom they had been brought into the right way, passing hence to the Lord should plead for them. He also gave thanks that he had so long continued in the flesh, till he saw his hearers accept and keep with him as Easter that day which they had ever before avoided. Thus the most reverend father being assured of their amendment, rejoiced to see the day of the Lord, and he saw it and was glad.

Chap. XXIII.

Of the present state of the English nation, or of all Britain. [725-731 a.d.]

In the year of our Lord 725, being the seventh year of Osric, king of the Northumbrians, who had succeeded Coenred, Wictred, the son of Egbert, king of Kent, died on the 23rd of April, and left his three sons, Ethelbert, Eadbert, and Alric, heirs of that kingdom, which he had governed thirty-four years and a half. The next year Tobias, bishop of the church of Rochester, died, a most learned man, as has been said before; for he was disciple to those masters of blessed memory, Theodore, the archbishop, and Abbot Hadrian, wherefore, as has been said, besides having a great knowledge of letters both ecclesiastical and general, he learned both the Greek and Latin tongues to such perfection, that they were as well known and familiar to him as his native language. He was buried in the chapel of St. Paul the Apostle, which he had built within the church of St. Andrew for his own place of burial. After him Aldwulf took upon him the office of bishop, having been consecrated by Archbishop Bertwald.

In the year of our Lord 729, two comets appeared about the sun, to the great terror of the beholders. One of them went before the sun in the morning at his rising, the other followed him when he set in the evening, as it were presaging dire disaster to both east and west; or without doubt one was the forerunner of the day, and the other of the night, to signify that mortals were threatened with calamities at both times. They carried their flaming brands towards the north, as it were ready to kindle a conflagration. They appeared in January, and continued nearly a fortnight. At which time a grievous blight fell upon Gaul, in that it was laid waste by the Saracens with cruel bloodshed; but not long after in that country they received the due reward of their unbelief. In that year the holy man of God, Egbert, departed to the Lord, as has been said above, on Easter day; and immediately after Easter, that is, on the 9th of May, Osric, king of the Northumbrians, departed this life, after he had reigned eleven years, and appointed Ceolwulf, brother to Coenred, who had reigned before him, his successor; the beginning and progress of whose reign have been so filled with many and great commotions and conflicts, that it cannot yet be known what is to be said concerning them, or what end they will have.

In the year of our Lord 731, Archbishop Bertwald died of old age, on the 13th of January, having held his see thirty-seven years, six months and fourteen days. In his stead, the same year, Tatwine, of the province of the Mercians, was made archbishop, having been a priest in the monastery called Briudun. He was consecrated in the city of Canterbury by the venerable men, Daniel, bishop of Winchester, Ingwald of London, Aldwin of Lichfield, and Aldwulf of Rochester, on Sunday, the 10th of June, being a man renowned for piety and wisdom, and of notable learning in Holy Scripture.

Thus at the present time, the bishops Tatwine and Aldwulf preside in the churches of Kent; Ingwald is bishop in the province of the East Saxons. In the province of the East Angles, the bishops are Aldbert and Hadulac; in the province of the West Saxons, Daniel and Forthere; in the province of the Mercians, Aldwin. Among those peoples who dwell beyond the river Severn to the westward, Walhstod is bishop; in the province of the Hwiccas, Wilfrid; in the province of Lindsey, Bishop Cynibert presides; the bishopric of the Isle of Wight belongs to Daniel, bishop of the city of Winchester. The province of the South Saxons, having now continued some years without a bishop, receives episcopal ministrations from the prelate of the West Saxons. All these provinces, and the other southern provinces, as far as the boundary formed by the river Humber, with their several kings, are subject to King Ethelbald.

But in the province of the Northumbrians, where King Ceolwulf reigns, four bishops now preside; Wilfrid in the church of York, Ethelwald in that of Lindisfarne, Acca in that of Hagustald, Pecthelm in that which is called the White House, which, as the number of the faithful has increased, has lately become an episcopal see, and has him for its first prelate. The Pictish people also at this time are at peace with the English nation, and rejoice in having their part in Catholic peace and truth with the universal Church. The Scots that inhabit Britain, content with their own territories, devise no plots nor hostilities against the English nation. The Britons, though they, for the most part, as a nation hate and oppose the English nation, and wrongfully, and from wicked lewdness, set themselves against the appointed Easter of the whole Catholic Church; yet, inasmuch as both Divine and human power withstand them, they can in neither purpose prevail as they desire; for though in part they are their own masters, yet part of them are brought under subjection to the English. In these favourable times of peace and calm, many of the Northumbrians, as well of the nobility as private persons, laying aside their weapons, and receiving the tonsure, desire rather both for themselves and their children to take upon them monastic vows, than to practise the pursuit of war. What will be the end hereof, the next age will see. This is for the present the state of all Britain; about two hundred and eighty-five years after the coming of the English into Britain, and in the 731st year of our Lord, in Whose kingdom that shall have no end let the earth rejoice; and Britain being one with them in the joy of His faith, let the multitude of isles be glad, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness.

Chap. XXIV.

Chronological recapitulation of the whole work: also concerning the author himself.

I have thought fit briefly to sum up those things which have been related at length under their particular dates, that they may be the better kept in memory.

In the sixtieth year before the Incarnation of our Lord, Caius Julius Cæsar, first of the Romans invaded Britain, and was victorious, yet could not maintain the supreme power there. [I, 2.]

In the year of our Lord, 46, Claudius, being the second of the Romans who came to Britain, received the surrender of a great part of the island, and added the Orkney islands to the Roman empire. [I, 3.]

In the year of our Lord 167, Eleuther, being made bishop at Rome, governed the Church most gloriously fifteen years. To whom Lucius, king of Britain, sent a letter, asking to be made a Christian, and succeeded in obtaining his request. [I, 4.]

In the year of our Lord 189, Severus, being made emperor, reigned seventeen years; he fortified Britain with a rampart from sea to sea. [I, 5.]

In the year 381, Maximus, being made emperor in Britain, crossed over into Gaul, and slew Gratian. [I, 9.]

In the year 409, Rome was overthrown by the Goths, from which time the Romans ceased to rule in Britain. [I, 11.]

In the year 430, Palladius was sent by Pope Celestine to the Scots that believed in Christ to be their first bishop. [I, 13.]

In the year 449, Marcian being made emperor with Valentinian, reigned seven years; in whose time the English, being called in by the Britons, came into Britain. [I, 15.]

In the year 538, an eclipse of the sun came to pass on the 16th of February, from the first hour until the third.

In the year 540, an eclipse of the sun came to pass on the 20th of June, and the stars appeared during almost half an hour after the third hour of the day.

In the year 547, Ida began to reign; he was the founder of the royal family of the Northumbrians, and he reigned twelve years.

In the year 565, the priest, Columba, came out of Scotland, into Britain, to teach the Picts, and he built a monastery in the isle of Hii. [III, 4.]

In the year 596, Pope Gregory sent Augustine with monks into Britain, to preach the good tidings of the Word of God to the English nation. [I, 23.]

In the year 597, the aforesaid teachers arrived in Britain; being about the 150th year from the coming of the English into Britain. [I, 25.]

In the year 601, Pope Gregory sent the pall into Britain to Augustine, who was already made bishop; he sent also several ministers of the Word, among

whom was Paulinus. [I, 29.]

In the year 603, a battle was fought at Degsastan. [I, 34.]

In the year 604, the East Saxons received the faith of Christ, under King Sabert, Mellitus being bishop. [II, 3.]

In the year 605, Gregory died. [II, 1.]

In the year 616, Ethelbert, king of Kent died. [II, 5.]

In the year 625, Paulinus was ordained bishop of the Northumbrians by Archbishop Justus. [II, 9.]

In the year 626, Eanfled, daughter of King Edwin, was baptized with twelve others, on the eve of Whitsunday. [*Ib.*]

In the year 627, King Edwin was baptized, with his nation, at Easter. [II, 14.]

In the year 633, King Edwin being killed, Paulinus returned to Kent. [II, 20.]

In the year 640, Eadbald, king of Kent, died. [III, 8.]

In the year 642, King Oswald was slain. [III, 9.]

In the year 644, Paulinus, formerly bishop of York, but then of the city of Rochester, departed to the Lord. [III, 14.]

In the year 651, King Oswin was killed, and Bishop Aidan died. [*Ibid.*]

In the year 653, the Middle Angles, under their prince, Penda, were admitted to the mysteries of the faith. [III, 21.]

In the year 655, Penda was slain, and the Mercians became Christians. [III, 24.]

In the year 664, an eclipse came to pass; Earconbert, king of Kent, died; and Colman with the Scots returned to his people; a pestilence arose; Ceadda and Wilfrid were ordained bishops of the Northumbrians. [III, 26-28, IV, 1.]

In the year 668, Theodore was ordained bishop. [IV, 1.]

In the year 670, Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, died. [IV, 5.]

In the year 673, Egbert, king of Kent, died; and a synod was held at Hertford, in the presence of King Egfrid, Archbishop Theodore presiding: the synod was of great profit, and its decrees are contained in ten articles. [*Ibid.*]

In the year 675, Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, when he had reigned seventeen years, died and left the government to his brother Ethelred.

In the year 676, Ethelred ravaged Kent. [IV, 12.]

In the year 678, a comet appeared; Bishop Wilfrid was driven from his see by King Egfrid; and Bosa, Eata, and Eadhaed were consecrated bishops in his stead. [*Ibid.*; V, 19.]

In the year 679, Aelfwine was killed. [IV, 21.]

In the year 680, a synod was held in the plain of Haethfelth, concerning the Catholic faith, Archbishop Theodore presiding; John, the Roman abbot, was also present. The same year also the Abbess Hilda died at Streanaeshalch. [IV, 17, 18, 23.]

In the year 685, Egfrid, king of the Northumbrians, was slain. The same

year Hlothere, king of Kent, died. [IV, 26.]

In the year 688, Caedwald, king of the West Saxons, went to Rome from Britain. [V, 7.]

In the year 690, Archbishop Theodore died. [V, 8.]

In the year 697, Queen Osthryth was murdered by her own nobles, to wit, the nobles of the Mercians.

In the year 698, Berctred, an ealdorman of the king of the Northumbrians, was slain by the Picts.

In the year 704, Ethelred, after he had reigned thirty-one years over the nation of the Mercians, became a monk, and gave up the kingdom to Coenred. [V, 19.]

In the year 705, Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, died. [V, 18.]

In the year 709, Coenred, king of the Mercians, having reigned five years, went to Rome. [V, 19.]

In the year 711, the commander Bertfrid fought with the Picts.

In the year 716, Osred, king of the Northumbrians, was killed; and Ceolred, king of the Mercians, died; and the man of God, Egbert, brought the monks of Hii to observe the Catholic Easter and the ecclesiastical tonsure. [V, 22.]

In the year 725, Wictred, king of Kent, died. [V, 23.]

In the year 729, comets appeared; the holy Egbert passed away; and Osric died. [*Ibid.*]

In the year 731, Archbishop Bertwald died. [*Ibid.*]

The same year Tatwine was consecrated ninth archbishop of the church of Canterbury, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Ethelbald, king of the Mercians. [*Ibid.*]

Thus much of the Ecclesiastical History of Britain, and more especially of the English nation, as far as I could learn either from the writings of the ancients, or the tradition of our forefathers, or of my own knowledge, with the help of the Lord, I, Bede, the servant of Christ, and priest of the monastery of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, which is at Wearmouth and Jarrow, have set forth. Having been born in the territory of that same monastery, I was given, by the care of kinsmen, at seven years of age, to be educated by the most reverend Abbot Benedict, and afterwards by Ceolfrid, and spending all the remaining time of my life a dweller in that monastery, I wholly applied myself to the study of Scripture; and amidst the observance of monastic rule, and the daily charge of singing in the church, I always took delight in learning, or teaching, or writing. In the nineteenth year of my age, I received deacon's orders; in the thirtieth, those of the priesthood, both of them by the ministry of the most reverend Bishop John, and at the bidding of the Abbot Ceolfrid. From the time when I received priest's orders, till the fifty-ninth year of my age, I have made it my business, for my own needs and those of my

brethren, to compile out of the works of the venerable Fathers, the following brief notes on the Holy Scriptures, and also to make some additions after the manner of the meaning and interpretation given by them:

On the Beginning of Genesis, to the birth of Isaac and the casting out of Ishmael, four books.

Concerning the Tabernacle and its Vessels, and of the Vestments of the Priests, three books.

On the first part of Samuel, to the Death of Saul, three books.

Concerning the Building of the Temple, of Allegorical Exposition, and other matters, two books.

Likewise on the Book of Kings, thirty Questions.

On the Proverbs of Solomon, three books.

On the Song of Songs, seven books.

On Isaiah, Daniel, the twelve Prophets, and Part of Jeremiah, Divisions of Chapters, collected from the Treatise of the blessed Jerome.

On Ezra and Nehemiah, three books.

On the song of Habakkuk, one book.

On the Book of the blessed Father Tobias, one Book of Allegorical Explanation concerning Christ and the Church.

Also, Chapters of Readings on the Pentateuch of Moses, Joshua, and Judges;

On the Books of Kings and Chronicles;

On the Book of the blessed Father Job;

On the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs;

On the Prophets Isaiah, Ezra, and Nehemiah.

On the Gospel of Mark, four books.

On the Gospel of Luke, six books.

Of Homilies on the Gospel, two books.

On the Apostle, whatsoever I have found in the works of St. Augustine I have taken heed to transcribe in order.

On the Acts of the Apostles, two books.

On the seven Catholic Epistles, a book on each.

On the Revelation of St. John, three books.

Likewise, Chapters of Lessons on all the New Testament, except the Gospel.

Likewise a book of Epistles to divers Persons, of which one is of the Six Ages of the world; one of the Halting-places of the Children of Israel; one on the words of Isaiah, "And they shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited"; one of the Reason of Leap-Year, and one of the Equinox, according to Anatolius.

Likewise concerning the Histories of Saints: I translated the Book of the Life and Passion of St. Felix, Confessor, from the metrical work of Paulinus, into prose; the Book of the Life and Passion of St. Anastasius, which was ill

translated from the Greek, and worse amended by some ignorant person, I have corrected as to the sense as far as I could; I have written the Life of the Holy Father Cuthbert, who was both monk and bishop, first in heroic verse, and afterwards in prose.

The History of the Abbots of this monastery, in which I rejoice to serve the Divine Goodness, to wit, Benedict, Ceolfrid, and Huaetbert, in two books.

The Ecclesiastical History of our Island and Nation, in five books.

The Martyrology of the Festivals of the Holy Martyrs, in which I have carefully endeavoured to set down all whom I could find, and not only on what day, but also by what sort of combat, and under what judge they overcame the world.

A Book of Hymns in divers sorts of metre, or rhythm.

A Book of Epigrams in heroic or elegiac verse.

Of the Nature of Things, and of the Times, one book of each; likewise, of the Times, one larger book.

A book of Orthography arranged in Alphabetical Order.

Likewise a Book of the Art of Poetry, and to it I have added another little Book of Figures of Speech or Tropes; that is, of the Figures and Modes of Speech in which the Holy Scriptures are written.

And I beseech Thee, good Jesus, that to whom Thou hast graciously granted sweetly to drink in the words of Thy knowledge, Thou wilt also vouchsafe in Thy loving-kindness that he may one day come to Thee, the Fountain of all wisdom, and appear for ever before Thy face.

Continuation

The Continuation of Bede.

In the year 731 King Ceolwulf was taken prisoner, and tonsured, and sent back to his kingdom; Bishop Acca was driven from his see.

In the year 732, Egbert was made Bishop of York, in the room of Wilfrid.

[Cynibert Bishop of Lindsey died.]

[In the year of our Lord 733, Archbishop Tatwine, having received the pall by Apostolic authority, ordained Alwic and Sigfrid, bishops.]

In the year 733, there was an eclipse of the sun on the 14th day of August about the third hour, in such wise that the whole orb of the sun seemed to be covered with a black and gloomy shield.

In the year 734, the moon, on the 31st of January, about the time of cock-crowing, was, for about a whole hour, coloured blood-red, after which a blackness followed, and she regained her wonted light.

In the year from the Incarnation of Christ, 734, bishop Tatwine died.

In the year 735, Nothelm was ordained archbishop; and bishop Egbert, having received the pall from the Apostolic see, was the first to be established as archbishop after Paulinus, and he ordained Frithbert, and Frithwald bishops; and the priest Bede died.

In the year 737, an excessive drought rendered the land unfruitful; and Ceolwulf, voluntarily receiving the tonsure, left the kingdom to Eadbert.

In the year 739, Edilhart, king of the West-Saxons, died, as did Archbishop Nothelm.

In the year 740, Cuthbert was consecrated in Nothelm's stead. Ethelbald, king of the Mercians, cruelly and wrongfully wasted part of Northumbria, their king, Eadbert, with his army, being employed against the Picts. Bishop Ethelwald died also, and Conwulf, was consecrated in his stead. Arnwin and Eadbert were slain.

In the year 741, a great drought came upon the country. Charles, king of the Franks, died; and his sons, Caroloman and Pippin, reigned in his stead.

In the year 745, Bishop Wilfrid and Ingwald, Bishop of London, departed to the Lord.

In the year 747, the man of God, Herefrid, died.

In the year 750, Cuthred, king of the West Saxons, rose up against king Ethelbald and Oengus; Theodor and Eanred died; Eadbert added the plain of Kyle and other places to his dominions.

In the year 753, in the fifth year of King Eadbert, on the 9th of January, an eclipse of the sun came to pass; afterwards, in the same year and month, on the 24th day of January, the moon suffered an eclipse, being covered with a gloomy, black shield, in like manner as was the sun a little while before.

In the year 754, Boniface, called also Winfrid, Bishop of the Franks,

received the crown of martyrdom, together with fifty-three others; and Redger was consecrated archbishop in his stead, by pope Stephen.

In the year 757, Ethelbald, king of the Mercians, was treacherously and miserably murdered, in the night, by his own guards; Beornred began his reign; Cyniwulf, king of the West Saxons, died; and the same year, Offa, having put Beornred to flight, sought to gain the kingdom of the Mercians by bloodshed.

In the year 758, Eadbert, king of the Northumbrians, receiving St. Peter's tonsure for the love of God, and to the end that he might take the heavenly country by force, left the kingdom to his son Oswulf.

In the year 755, Oswulf was wickedly murdered by his own thegns; and Ethelwald, being chosen the same year by his people, entered upon the kingdom; in whose second year there was great tribulation by reason of pestilence, which continued almost two years, divers grievous sicknesses raging, but more especially the disease of dysentery.

In the year 761, Oengus, king of the Picts, died; who, from the beginning to the end of his reign, continued to be a blood-stained and tyrannical butcher; Oswin was also slain.

In the year 765, King Aluchred came to the throne.

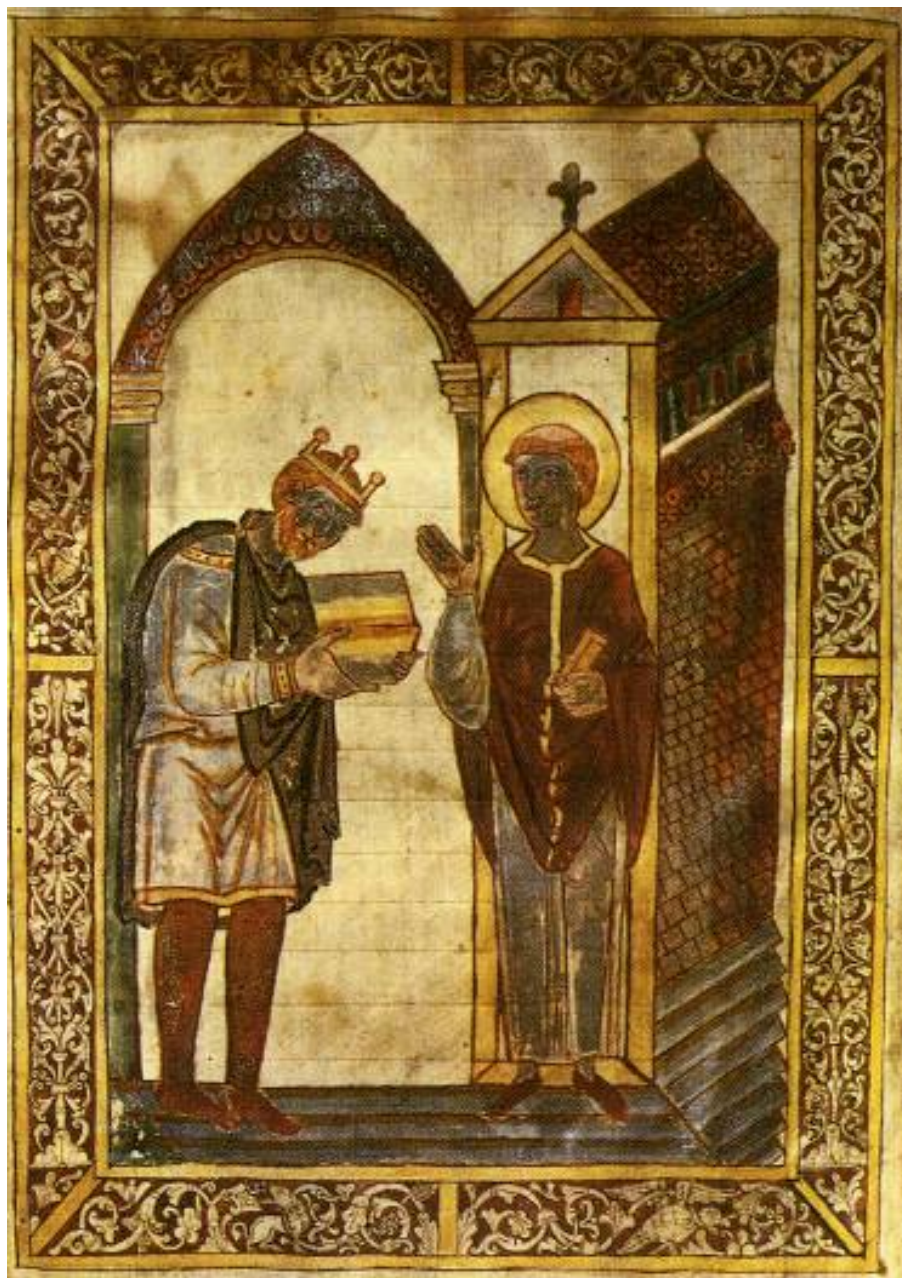
In the year 766 a.d., Archbishop Egbert, of the royal race, and endued with divine knowledge, as also Frithbert, both of them truly faithful bishops, departed to the Lord.

THE LIFE AND MIRACLES OF SAINT CUTHBERT, BISHOP OF LINDISFARNE



Translated by J. A. Giles

Bede wrote this life of Saint Cuthbert in about AD 721. It is in part based on an earlier life of the saint, anonymous but probably written by a monk of Lindisfarne. Saint Cuthbert (c. 634-687) was a saint of the early Northumbrian Church in the Celtic tradition. He was a monk, bishop and hermit, associated with the monasteries of Melrose and Lindisfarne in what might loosely be termed the Kingdom of Northumbria. After his death he became one of the most important medieval saints of Northern England, with a cult centred on his tomb at Durham Cathedral. Now, Cuthbert is regarded as the patron saint of northern England.

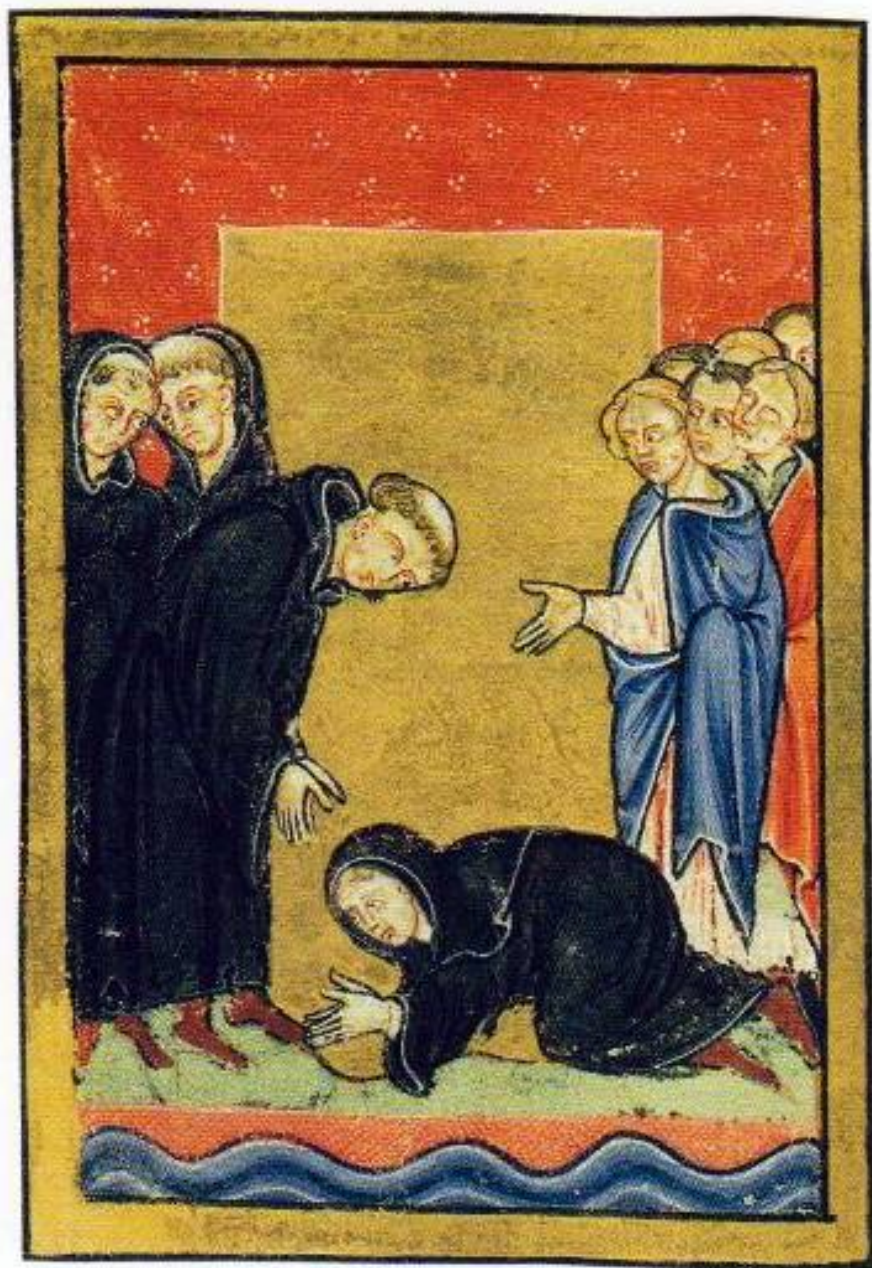


A page from a copy of Bede's 'Lives of St. Cuthbert', showing King Athelstan presenting the work to the saint. This manuscript was given to St. Cuthbert's shrine in 934.

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Cuthbert meets Ælfflæd of Whitby on Coquet Island, 'Bede's Life of Cuthbert', 12th century

PREFACE TO THE VERSE LIFE OF ST. CUTHBERT.

*To the Lord John, Priest and most beloved in the Lord of Lords, Bede, the
Servant of Christ, sendeth Health.*

IT cannot be expressed, my beloved Lord in Christ, how much I feel your affection, and am always delighted, if so it might be, by your presence, nor how much I am excited by the continual memory of your holy sweetness, even amid the discomforts of the long journey, which you are eager to enter upon. Wherefore, (either to commemorate my own devotion, or to lighten the burden of your journey,) I have offered unto you the acts of the blessed Bishop Cuthbert, which I have lately written in verse. For I trust, without any doubt, that the company of so great a man may confer much happiness. For the sweetness of his affability consoles the sorrower; his contrite fervour stimulates the fainting; and his vigorous intercession defends him who is in danger. But you must know that I have not been able to relate all his acts: for both new wonders are daily wrought by his relics, and his old achievements are, in a novel way, confirmed by those who were able to know. One of these, as I already told you, I have in myself experienced in the guidance of my tongue whilst I was singing of his miracles. But if the powers of life accompany the wish, and the divine will be in unison with my inclinations, I hope that in another work I shall hand down to memory some of those things which I had omitted. I beseech you, when you shall have arrived, under God's protection, at the gate of the blessed Apostles, to remember and intercede with God in my behalf.

PREFACE.

*To the holy and most blessed Father Bishop Eadfrid, and to all the
Congregation of Brothers also, who serve Christ in the Island of Lindisfarne,
Bede, your faithful fellow-servant, sends greeting.*

INASMUCH as you bade me, my beloved, prefix to the book, which I have written at your request about the life of our father Cuthbert, of blessed memory, some preface, as I usually do, by which its readers might become acquainted with your desire and my readiness to gratify it, it has seemed good to me, by way of preface, to recal to the minds of those among you who know, and to make known to those readers who were before ignorant thereof, how that I have not presumed without minute investigation to write any of the deeds of so great a man, nor without the most accurate examination of credible witnesses to hand over what I had written to be transcribed. Moreover, when I learnt from those who knew the beginning, the middle, and the end of his glorious life and conversation, I sometimes inserted the names of these my authors, to establish the truth of my narrative, and thus ventured to put my pen to paper and to write. But when my work was arranged, but still kept back from publication, I frequently submitted it for perusal and for correction to our reverend brother Herefrid the priest, and others, who for a long time had well known the life and conversation of that man of God. Some faults were, at their suggestion, carefully amended, and thus every scruple being utterly removed, I have taken care to commit to writing what I clearly ascertained to be the truth, and to bring it into your presence also, my brethren, in order that by the judgment of your authority, what I have written might be either corrected, if false, or certified to be true. Whilst, with God's assistance, I was so engaged, and my book was read during two days by the elders and teachers of your congregation, and was accurately weighed and examined in all its parts, there was nothing at all found which required to be altered, but every thing which I had written was by common consent pronounced worthy to be read without any hesitation, and to be handed over to be copied by such as by zeal for religion should be disposed to do so. But you also, in my presence, added many other facts of no less importance than what I had written, concerning the life and virtues of that blessed man, and which well deserved to be mentioned, if I had not thought it unmeet to insert new matter into a work, which, after due deliberation, I considered to be perfect.

Furthermore, I have thought right to admonish your gracious company, that, as I have not delayed to render prompt obedience to your commands, so you also may not be slow to confer on me the reward of your intercession; but when you read this book, and in pious recollection of that holy father lift up your souls with ardour in aspiration for the heavenly kingdom, do not forget

to entreat the Divine clemency in favour of my littleness, in as far as I may deserve both at present with singleness of mind to long for and hereafter in perfect happiness to behold the goodness of our Lord in the land of the living. But also when I am defunct, pray ye for the redemption of my soul, for I was your friend and faithful servant; offer up masses for me, and enrol my name among your own. For you, also, most holy prelate, remember to have promised this to me, and in testimony of such future enrolment you gave orders to your pious brother Guthfrid, that he should even now enrol my name in the white book of your holy congregation. And may your holiness know that I already have written in heroic verse, as well as in this prose work, which I offer to you, the life of this same our father beloved by God, somewhat more briefly indeed, but nevertheless in the same order, because some of our brethren entreated the same of me: and if you wish to have those verses, you can obtain from me a copy of them. In the preface of that work I promised that I would write more fully at another time of his life and miracles; which promise, in my present work, I have, as far as God has allowed me, done my best to perform.

Wherefore it is my prayer for you, that Almighty God may deign to guard your holinesses in peace and safety, dearest brethren and masters of mine. — Amen!

CHAPTER I.

HOW CUTHBERT, THE CHILD OF GOD, WAS WARNED BY A CHILD OF HIS FUTURE BISHOPRIC.

The beginning of our history of the life of the blessed Cuthbert is hallowed by Jeremy the prophet, who, in exaltation of the anchorite's perfect state, says, "It is good for a man, when he hath borne the yoke from his youth; he shall sit alone, and shall be silent, because he shall raise himself above himself." For, inspired by the sweetness of this good, Cuthbert, the man of God, from his early youth bent his neck beneath the yoke of the monastic institution; and when occasion presented itself, having laid fast hold of the anachoretic life, he rejoiced to sit apart for no small space of time, and for the sweetness of divine meditation to hold his tongue silent from human colloquy. But that he should be able to do this in his advanced years, was the effect of God's grace inciting him gradually to the way of truth from his early childhood; for even to the eighth year of his life, which is the first year of boyhood succeeding to infancy, he gave his mind to such plays and enjoyments alone as boys delight in, so that it might be testified of him as it was of Samuel, "Moreover Cuthbert knew not yet the Lord, neither had the voice of the Lord been revealed to him." Such was the panegyric of his boyhood, who in more ripened age was destined perfectly to know the Lord, and opening the ears of his mind to imbibe the voice of God. He took delight, as we have stated, in mirth and clamour; and, as was natural at his age, rejoiced to attach himself to the company of other boys, and to share in their sports: and because he was agile by nature, and of a quick mind, he often prevailed over them in their boyish contests, and frequently, when the rest were tired, he alone would hold out, and look triumphantly around to see if any remained to contend with him for victory. For in jumping, running, wrestling, or any other bodily exercise, he boasted that he could surpass all those who were of the same age, and even some that were older than himself. For when he was a child, he knew as a child, he thought as a child; but afterwards, when he became a man, he most abundantly laid aside all those childish things.

And indeed Divine Providence found from the first a worthy preceptor to curb the sallies of his youthful mind. For, as Trumwine of blessed memory told me on the authority of Cuthbert himself, there were one day some customary games going on in a field, and a large number of boys were got together, amongst whom was Cuthbert, and in the excitement of boyish whims, several of them began to bend their bodies into various unnatural forms. On a sudden, one of them, apparently about three years old, runs up to Cuthbert, and in a firm tone exhorts him not to indulge in idle play and follies, but to cultivate the powers of his mind, as well as those of his body. When Cuthbert made light of his advice, the boy fell to the ground, and shed tears

bitterly. The rest run up to console him, but he persists in weeping. They ask him why he burst out crying so unexpectedly. At length he made answer, and turning to Cuthbert, who was trying to comfort him, "Why," said he, "do you, holy Cuthbert, priest and prelate! give yourself up to these things which are so opposite to your nature and rank? It does not become you to be playing among children, when the Lord has appointed you to be a teacher of virtue even to those who are older than yourself." Cuthbert, being a boy of a good disposition, heard these words with evident attention, and pacifying the crying child with affectionate caresses, immediately abandoned his vain sports, and returning home, began from that moment to exhibit an unusual decision both of mind and character, as if the same Spirit which had spoken outwardly to him by the mouth of the boy, were now beginning to exert its influence inwardly in his heart. Nor ought we to be surprised that the same God can restrain the levity of a child by the mouth of a child, who made even the dumb beast to speak when He would check the folly of the prophet: and truly it is said in his honour, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou perfected praise!"

CHAPTER II.

HOW HE BECAME LAME WITH A SWELLING IN HIS KNEE, AND WAS CURED BY AN ANGEL.

BUT because to every one who hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; that is, to every one who hath the determination and the love of virtue, shall be given, by Divine Providence, an abundance of these things; since Cuthbert, the child of God, carefully retained in his mind what he had received from the admonition of man, he was thought worthy also of being comforted by the company and conversation of angels. For his knee was seized with a sudden pain, and began to swell into a large tumour; the nerves of his thigh became contracted, and he was obliged to walk lamely, dragging after him his diseased leg, until at length the pain increased, and he was unable to walk at all. One day he had been carried out of doors by the attendants, and was reclining in the open air, when he suddenly saw at a distance a man on horseback approaching, clothed in white garments, and honourable to be looked upon, and the horse, too, on which he sat, was of incomparable beauty. He drew near to Cuthbert, and saluted him mildly, and asked him as in jest, whether he had no civilities to show to such a guest. "Yes," said the other, "I should be most ready to jump up and offer you all the attention in my power, were I not, for my sins, held bound by this infirmity: for I have long had this painful swelling in my knee, and no physician, with all his care, has yet been able to heal me." The man, leaping from his horse, began to look earnestly at the diseased knee. Presently he said, "Boil some wheaten flour in milk, and apply the poultice warm to the swelling, and you will be well." Having said this, he again mounted his horse and departed. Cuthbert did as he was told, and after a few days was well. He at once perceived that it was an angel who had given him the advice, and sent by Him who formerly deigned to send his archangel Raphael to restore the eyesight of Tobit. If any one think it incredible that an angel should appear on horseback, let him read the history of the Maccabees, in which angels are said to have come on horseback to the assistance of Judas Maccabæus, and to defend God's own temple.

CHAPTER III.

HOW HE CHANGED THE WINDS BY PRAYER, AND BROUGHT THE SCATTERED SHIPS SAFE TO LAND.

From this time the lad becoming devoted to the Lord, as he afterwards assured his friends, often prayed to God amid dangers that surrounded him, and was defended by angelic assistance; nay, even in behalf of others who were in any danger, his benevolent piety sent forth prayers to God, and he was heard by Him who listens to the cry of the poor, and the men were rescued out of all their tribulations. There is, moreover a monastery lying towards the south, not far from the mouth of the river Tyne, at that time consisting of monks, but now changed, like all other human things, by time, and inhabited by a noble company of virgins, dedicated to Christ. Now, as these pious servants of God were gone to bring from a distance in ships, up the above-named river, some timber for the use of the monastery, and had already come opposite the place where they were to bring the ships to land, behold a violent wind, rising from the west, carried away their ships, and scattered them to a distance from the river's mouth. The brethren, seeing this from the monastery, launched some boats into the river, and tried to succour those who were on board the vessels, but were unable, because the force of the tide and violence of the winds overcame them. In despair therefore of human aid, they had recourse to God, and issuing forth from the monastery, they gathered themselves together on a point of rock, near which the vessels were tossing in the sea: here they bent their knees, and supplicated the Lord for those whom they saw under such imminent danger of destruction. But the Divine will was in no haste to grant these vows, however earnest; and this was, without a doubt, in order that it might be seen what effect was in Cuthbert's prayers. For there was a large multitude of people standing on the other bank of the river, and Cuthbert also was among them. Whilst the monks were looking on in sorrow, seeing the vessels, five in number, hurried rapidly out to sea, so that they looked like five sea-birds on the waves, the multitude began to deride their manner of life, as if they had deserved to suffer this loss, by abandoning the usual modes of life, and framing for themselves new rules by which to guide their conduct. Cuthbert restrained the insults of the blasphemers, saying, "What are you doing, my brethren, in thus reviling those whom you see hurried to destruction? Would it not be better and more humane to entreat the Lord in their behalf, than thus to take delight in their misfortunes?" But the rustics, turning on him with angry minds and angry mouths, exclaimed, "Nobody shall pray for them: may God spare none of them! for they have taken away from men the ancient rites and customs, and how the new ones are to be attended to, nobody knows." At this reply, Cuthbert fell on his knees to pray, and bent his head towards the earth; immediately the power of the winds was

checked, the vessels, with their conductors rejoicing, were cast upon the land near the monastery, at the place intended. The rustics blushing for their infidelity, both on the spot extolled the faith of Cuthbert as it deserved, and never afterwards ceased to extol it: so that one of the most worthy brothers of our monastery, from whose mouth I received this narrative, said that he had often, in company with many others, heard it related by one of those who were present, a man of the most rustic simplicity, and altogether incapable of telling an untruth.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW, IN COMPANY WITH SHEPHERDS, HE SAW THE SOUL OF BISHOP AIDAN CARRIED TO HEAVEN BY ANGELS.

But whereas the grace of Christ, which is the directress of the life of the faithful, decreed that its servant should encounter the merit of a more rigid institution, and earn the glory of a higher prize, it chanced upon a time that he was tending a flock of sheep entrusted to his care on some distant mountains. One night, whilst his companions were sleeping, and he himself was awake, as he was wont to be, and engaged in prayer, on a sudden he saw a long stream of light break through the darkness of the night, and in the midst of it a company of the heavenly host descended to the earth, and having received among them a spirit of surpassing brightness, returned without delay to their heavenly home. The young man, beloved of God, was struck with the sight, and, stimulated to encounter the honours of spiritual warfare, and to earn for himself eternal life and happiness among God's mighty ones, he forthwith offered up praise and thanksgivings to the Lord, and called upon his companions, with brotherly exhortations, to imitate his example. "Miserable men that we are," said he, "whilst we are resigning ourselves to sleep and idleness, we take no thought to behold the light of God's holy angels, who never sleep. Behold, whilst I was awake and praying, during a moderate portion of the night, I saw such great miracles of God. The door of heaven was opened, and there was led in thither, amidst an angelic company, the spirit of some holy man, who now, for ever blessed, beholds the glory of the heavenly mansion, and Christ its King, whilst we still grovel amid this earthly darkness: and I think it must have been some holy bishop, or some favoured one from out of the company of the faithful, whom I saw thus carried into heaven amid so much splendour by that large angelic choir." As the man of God said these words, the hearts of the shepherds were kindled up to reverence and praise. When the morning was come, he found that Aidan, bishop of the Church of Lindisfarne, a man of exalted piety, had ascended to the heavenly kingdom at the very moment of his vision. Immediately, therefore, he delivered over the sheep, which he was feeding, to their owners, and determined forthwith to enter a monastery.

CHAPTER V.

HOW, ON HIS WAY, HE WAS SUPPLIED WITH FOOD BY GOD.

And when he now began with care to meditate on his intended entrance to a more rigid course of life, God's grace was revealed to him, whereby his mind was strengthened in its purpose, and it was shown to him by the clearest evidence, that to those who seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness, the bounty of the Divine promise will grant all other things also, which are necessary for their bodily support. For on a certain day, as he was journeying alone, he turned aside at the fourth hour into a village which lay at some distance, and to which he found his way. Here he entered the house of a pious mother of a family, in order to rest himself a little, and to procure food for his horse rather than for himself, for it was the beginning of winter. The woman received him kindly, and begged him to allow her to get him some dinner, that he might refresh himself. The man of God refused, saying, "I cannot yet eat, for it is a fast-day." It was the sixth day of the week, on which many of the faithful, out of reverence to the Lord's passion, are accustomed to extend their fasting even to the ninth hour. The woman, from a motive of hospitality, persisted in her request. "Behold," said she, "on the way you are going there is no village, nor house; you have a long journey before you, and cannot get through it before sunset. Let me entreat you, therefore, to take some food before you go, or else you will be obliged to fast all the day, and perhaps even till to-morrow." But though the woman pressed him much, his love of religion prevailed, and he fasted the whole day until the evening.

When the evening drew near, and he perceived that he could not finish his intended journey the same day, and that there was no house at hand in which he could pass the night, he presently fell upon some shepherds' huts, which, having been slightly constructed in the summer, were now deserted and ruinous. Into one of these he entered, and having tied his horse to the wall, placed before him a handful of hay, which the wind had forced from the roof. He then turned his thoughts to prayer, but suddenly, as he was singing a psalm, he saw his horse lift up his head and pull out some straw from the roof, and among the straw there fell down a linen cloth folded up, with something in it. When he had ended his prayers, wishing to see what this was, he came and opened the cloth, and found in it half of a loaf of bread, still hot, and some meat, enough of both to serve him for a single meal. In gratitude for the Divine goodness, he exclaimed, "Thanks be to God, who of his bounty hath deigned to provide a meal for me when I was hungry, as well as a supper for my beast." He therefore divided the piece of bread into two parts, of which he gave one to his horse and kept the other for himself; and from that day forward he was more ready than before to fast, because he now felt convinced that the food had been provided for him in the desert by the gift of Him who

formerly fed the prophet Elias for so long a time by means of ravens, when there was no man to minister unto him, whose eyes are upon those that fear Him, and upon those who trust in his mercy, that He may save their souls from death, and may feed them when they are hungry. I learnt these particulars from a religious man of our monastery of Weremouth, a priest of the name of Ingwald, who now, by reason of his extreme old age, is turning his attention, in purity of heart, to spiritual things rather than to earthly and carnal affections, and who said that the authority on which his relation rested was no less than that of Cuthbert himself.

CHAPTER VI.

HOW, AS HE WAS COMING TO A MONASTERY, BOISIL, A HOLY MAN, BORE TESTIMONY TO HIM BY PROPHESYING IN SPIRIT.

Meanwhile this reverend servant of God, abandoning worldly things, hastens to submit to monastic discipline, having been excited by his heavenly vision to covet the joys of everlasting happiness, and invited by the food with which God had supplied him to encounter hunger and thirst in his service. He knew that the Church of Lindisfarne contained many holy men, by whose teaching and example he might be instructed, but he was moved by the great reputation of Boisil, a monk and priest of surpassing merit, to choose for himself an abode in the abbey of Melrose. And it happened by chance, that when he was arrived there, and had leaped from his horse, that he might enter the church to pray, he gave his horse and travelling spear to a servant, for he had not yet resigned the dress and habits of a layman. Boisil was standing before the doors of the monastery, and saw him first. Foreseeing in spirit what an illustrious man the stranger would become, he made this single remark to the bystanders: "Behold a servant of the Lord!" herein imitating Him who said of Nathaniel, when he approached Him, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile!" I was told this by that veteran priest and servant of God, the pious Sigfrid, for he was standing by when Boisil said these words, and was at that time a youth studying the first rudiments of the monastic life in that same monastery; but now he is a man, perfect in the Lord, living in our monastery of Yarrow, and amid the last sighs of his fainting body thirsting for a happy entrance into another life. Boisil, without saying more, kindly received Cuthbert as he approached; and when he had heard the cause of his coming, namely, that he preferred the monastery to the world, he kept him near himself, for he was the prior of that same monastery.

After a few days, when Eata, who was at that time priest and abbot of the monastery, but afterwards bishop of Lindisfarne, was come, Boisil told him about Cuthbert, how that he was a young man of a promising disposition, and obtained permission that he should receive the tonsure, and be enrolled among the brethren. When he had thus entered the monastery, he conformed himself to the rules of the place with the same zeal as the others, and, indeed, sought to surpass them by observing stricter discipline; and in reading, working, watching, and praying, he fairly outdid them all. Like the mighty Samson of old, he carefully abstained from every drink which could intoxicate; but was not able to abstain equally from food, lest his body might be thereby rendered less able to work: for he was of a robust frame and of unimpaired strength, and fit for any labour which he might be disposed to take in hand.

CHAPTER VII.

HOW HE ENTERTAINED AN ANGEL, AND WHILST MINISTERING TO HIM EARTHLY BREAD, WAS THOUGHT WORTHY TO BE REWARDED WITH BREAD FROM HEAVEN.

SOME years after, it pleased King Alfred, for the redemption of his soul, to grant to Abbot Eata a certain tract of country called Inrhipum, in which to build a monastery. The abbot, in consequence of this grant, erected the intended building, and placed therein certain of his brother-monks, among whom was Cuthbert, and appointed for them the same rules and discipline which were observed at Melrose. It chanced that Cuthbert was appointed to the office of receiving strangers, and he is said to have entertained an angel of the Lord who came to make trial of his piety. For, as he went very early in the morning, from the interior of the monastery into the strangers' cell, he found there seated a young person, whom he considered to be a man, and entertained as such. He gave him water to wash his hands; he washed his feet himself, wiped them, and humbly dried them in his bosom; after which he entreated him to remain till the third hour of the day and take some breakfast, lest, if he should go on his journey fasting, he might suffer from hunger and the cold of winter. For he took him to be a man, and thought that a long journey by night and a severe fall of snow had caused him to turn in thither in the morning to rest himself. The other replied, that he could not tarry, for the home to which he was hastening lay at some distance. After much entreaty, Cuthbert adjured him in God's name to stop; and as the third hour was now come, prayer over, and it was time to breakfast, he placed before him a table with some food, and said, "I beseech thee, brother, eat and refresh thyself, whilst I go and fetch some hot bread, which must now, I think, be just baked." When he returned, the young man, whom he had left eating, was gone, and he could see no traces of his footsteps, though there had been a fresh fall of snow, which would have exhibited marks of a person walking upon it, and shown which way he went. The man of God was astonished, and revolving the circumstance in his mind, put back the table in the dining-room. Whilst doing so, he perceived a most surprising odour and sweetness; and looking round to see from what it might proceed, he saw three white loaves placed there, of unusual whiteness and excellence. Trembling at the sight, he said within himself, "I perceive that it was an angel of the Lord whom I entertained, and that he came to feed us, not to be fed himself. Behold, he hath brought such loaves as this earth never produced; they surpass the lily in whiteness, the rose in odour, and honey in taste. They are, therefore, not produced from this earth, but are sent from paradise. No wonder that he rejected my offer of earthly food, when he enjoys such bread as this in heaven." The man of God was stimulated by this powerful miracle to be more zealous still in performing works of piety; and

with his deeds did increase upon him also the grace of God. From that time he often saw and conversed with angels, and when hungry was fed with unwonted food furnished direct from God. He was affable and pleasant in his character; and when he was relating to the fathers the acts of their predecessors, as an incentive to piety, he would introduce also, in the meekest way, the spiritual benefits which the love of God had conferred upon himself. And this he took care to do in a covert manner, as if it had happened to another person. His hearers, however, perceived that he was speaking of himself, after the pattern of that master who at one time unfolds his own merits without disguise, and at another time says, under the guise of another, "I knew a man in Christ fourteen years ago, who was carried up into the third heaven."

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW CUTHBERT WAS RECOVERED FROM SICKNESS, AND BOISIL, ON HIS DEATH-BED, FORETOLD TO HIM HIS FUTURE FORTUNES.

Meanwhile, as every thing in this world is frail and fluctuating, like the sea when a storm comes on, the above-named Abbot Eata, with Cuthbert and the other brethren, were expelled from their residence, and the monastery given to others. But our worthy champion of Christ did not by reason of his change of place relax his zeal in carrying on the spiritual conflict which he had undertaken; but he attended, as he had ever done, to the precepts and example of the blessed Boisil. About this time, according to his friend Herefrid the priest, who was formerly abbot of the monastery of Lindisfarne, he was seized with a pestilential disease, of which many inhabitants of Britain were at that time sick. The brethren of the monastery passed the whole night in prayer for his life and health; for they thought it essential to them that so pious a man should be present with them in the flesh. They did this without his knowing it; and when they told him of it in the morning, he exclaimed, "Then why am I lying here? I did not think it possible that God should have neglected your prayers: give me my stick and shoes." Accordingly, he got out of bed, and tried to walk, leaning on his stick; and finding his strength gradually return, he was speedily restored to health: but because the swelling on his thigh, though it died away to all outward appearances, struck into his inwards, he felt a little pain in his inside all his life afterwards; so that, as we find it expressed in the Apostles, "his strength was perfected in weakness."

When that servant of the Lord, Boisil, saw that Cuthbert was restored, he said, "You see, my brother, how you have recovered from your disease, and I assure you it will give you no further trouble, nor are you likely to die at present. I advise you, inasmuch as death is waiting for me, to learn from me all you can whilst I am able to teach you; for I have only seven days longer to enjoy my health of body, or to exercise the powers of my tongue." Cuthbert, implicitly believing what he heard, asked him what he would advise him to begin to read, so as to be able to finish it in seven days. "John the Evangelist," said Boisil. "I have a copy containing seven quarto sheets: we can, with God's help, read one every day, and meditate thereon as far as we are able." They did so accordingly, and speedily accomplished the task; for they sought therein only that simple faith which operates by love, and did not trouble themselves with minute and subtle questions. After their seven days' study was completed, Boisil died of the above-named complaint; and after death entered into the joys of eternal life. They say that, during these seven days, he foretold to Cuthbert every thing which should happen to him: for, as I have said before, he was a prophet and a man of remarkable piety. And, moreover,

he had three years ago foretold to Abbot Eata, that this pestilence would come, and that he himself would die of it; but that the abbot should die of another disease, which the physicians call dysentery; and in this also he was a true prophet, as the event proved. Among others, he told Cuthbert that he should be ordained bishop. When Cuthbert became an anchorite, he would not communicate this prophecy to any one, but with much sorrow assured the brethren who came to visit him, that if he had a humble residence on a rock, where the waves of the ocean shut him out from all the world, he should not even then consider himself safe from its snares, but should be afraid that on some occasion or other he might fall victim to the love of riches.

CHAPTER IX.

HOW CUTHBERT WAS ZEALOUS IN THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD.

AFTER the death of Boisil, Cuthbert took upon himself the duties of the office before mentioned; and for many years discharged them with the most pious zeal, as became a saint: for he not only furnished both precept and example to his brethren of the monastery, but sought to lead the minds of the neighbouring people to the love of heavenly things. Many of them, indeed, disgraced the faith which they professed, by unholy deeds; and some of them, in the time of mortality, neglecting the sacrament of their creed, had recourse to idolatrous remedies, as if by charms or amulets, or any other mysteries of the magical art, they were able to avert a stroke inflicted upon them by the Lord. To correct these errors, he often went out from the monastery, sometimes on horseback, sometimes on foot, and preached the way of truth to the neighbouring villages, as Boisil, his predecessor, had done before him. It was at this time customary for the English people to flock together when a clerk or priest entered a village, and listen to what he said, that so they might learn something from him, and amend their lives. Now Cuthbert was so skilful in teaching, and so zealous in what he undertook, that none dared to conceal from him their thoughts, but all acknowledged what they had done amiss; for they supposed that it was impossible to escape his notice, and they hoped to merit forgiveness by an honest confession. He was mostly accustomed to travel to those villages which lay in out of the way places among the mountains, which by their poverty and natural horrors deterred other visitors. Yet even here did his devoted mind find exercise for his powers of teaching, insomuch that he often remained a week, sometimes two or three, nay, even a whole month, without returning home; but dwelling among the mountains, taught the poor people, both by the words of his preaching, and also by his own holy conduct.

CHAPTER X.

HOW CUTHBERT PASSED THE NIGHT IN THE SEA, PRAYING; AND WHEN HE WAS COME OUT, TWO ANIMALS OF THE SEA DID HIM REVERENCE; AND HOW THE BROTHER, WHO SAW THOSE THINGS, BEING IN FEAR, WAS ENCOURAGED BY CUTHBERT.

When this holy man was thus acquiring renown by his virtues and miracles, Ebbe, a pious woman and handmaid of Christ, was the head of a monastery at a place called the city of Coludi, remarkable both for piety and noble birth, for she was half-sister of King Oswy. She sent messengers to the man of God, entreating him to come and visit her monastery. This loving message from the handmaid of his Lord he could not treat with neglect, but, coming to the place and stopping several days there, he confirmed, by his life and conversation, the way of truth which he taught.

Here also, as elsewhere, he would go forth, when others were asleep, and having spent the night in watchfulness, return home at the hour of morning-prayer. Now one night, a brother of the monastery, seeing him go out alone, followed him privately to see what he should do. But he, when he left the monastery, went down to the sea, which flows beneath, and going into it, until the water reached his neck and arms, spent the night in praising God. When the dawn of day approached, he came out of the water, and, falling on his knees, began to pray again. Whilst he was doing this, two quadrupeds, called otters, came up from the sea, and, lying down before him on the sand, breathed upon his feet, and wiped them with their hair: after which, having received his blessing, they returned to their native element. Cuthbert himself returned home in time to join in the accustomed hymns with the other brethren. The brother, who waited for him on the heights, was so terrified that he could hardly reach home; and early in the morning he came and fell at his feet, asking his pardon, for he did not doubt that Cuthbert was fully acquainted with all that had taken place. To whom Cuthbert replied, "What is the matter, my brother? What have you done? Did you follow me to see what I was about to do? I forgive you for it on one condition, — that you tell it to nobody before my death." In this he followed the example of our Lord, who, when He showed his glory to his disciples on the mountain, said, "See that you tell no man, until the Son of man be risen from the dead." When the brother had assented to this condition, he gave him his blessing, and released him from all his trouble. The man concealed this miracle during St. Cuthbert's life; but, after his death, took care to tell it to as many persons as he was able.

CHAPTER XI.

HOW, WHEN THE SAILORS WERE PREVENTED FROM SAILING BY BAD WEATHER, HE PREDICTED THAT IT WOULD BE FINE ON A CERTAIN DAY, AND HOW HE OBTAINED FOOD BY PRAYER.

Meanwhile the man of God began to wax strong in the spirit of prophecy, to foretell future events, and to describe to those he was with what things were going on elsewhere. Once upon a time he left the monastery for some necessary reason, and went by sea to the land of the Picts, which is called Niduari. Two of the brethren accompanied him; and one of these, who afterwards discharged the priest's office, made known to several the miracle which the man of God there performed. They arrived there the day after Christmasday, hoping, because the weather and sea were both tranquil, that they should soon return; and for this reason they took no food with them. They were, however, deceived in their expectations; for no sooner were they come to land, than a tempest arose, and prevented them from returning. After stopping there several days, suffering from cold and hunger, the day of the holy Epiphany was at hand, and the man of God, who had spent the night in prayer and watching, not in idleness or sloth, addressed them with cheerful and soothing language, as he was accustomed: "Why do we remain here idle? Let us do the best we can to save ourselves. The ground is covered with snow, and the heaven with clouds; the currents of both winds and waves are right against us: we are famished with hunger, and there is no one to relieve us. Let us importune the Lord with our prayers, that, as He opened to his people a path through the Red Sea, and miraculously fed them in the wilderness, He may take pity on us also in our present distress. If our faith does not waver, I do not think He will suffer us to remain all this day fasting — a day which He formerly made so bright with his heavenly majesty. I pray you, therefore, to come with me and see what provision He has made for us, that we may ourselves rejoice in his joy." Saying these words, he led them to the shore where he himself had been accustomed to pray at night. On their arrival, they found there three pieces of dolphin's flesh, looking as if some one had cut them and prepared them to be cooked. They fell on their knees and gave thanks to God. "You see, my beloved brethren," said Cuthbert, "how great is the grace of God to him who hopes and trusts in the Lord. Behold, He has prepared food for his servants; and by the number three points out to us how long we must remain here. Take, therefore, the gifts which Christ has sent us; let us go and refresh ourselves, and abide here without fear, for after three days there will most assuredly be a calm, both of the heavens and of the sea." All this was so as he had said: three days the storm lasted most violently; on the fourth day the promised calm followed, and they returned with a fair wind

home.

CHAPTER XII.

HOW HE FORETOLD THAT, ON A JOURNEY, AN EAGLE WOULD BRING HIM FOOD, AND HOW THIS TOOK PLACE ACCORDINGLY.

It happened, also, that on a certain day he was going forth from the monastery to preach, with one attendant only, and when they became tired with walking, though a great part of their journey still lay before them ere they could reach the village to which they were going, Cuthbert said to his follower, "Where shall we stop to take refreshment? or do you know any one on the road to whom we may turn in?"—"I was myself thinking on the same subject," said the boy; "for we have brought no provisions with us, and I know no one on the road who will entertain us, and we have a long journey still before us, which we cannot well accomplish without eating." The man of God replied, "My son, learn to have faith, and trust in God, who will never suffer to perish with hunger those who trust in Him." Then looking up, and seeing an eagle flying in the air, he said, "Do you perceive that eagle yonder? It is possible for God to feed us even by means of that eagle." As they were thus discoursing, they came near a river, and behold the eagle was standing on its bank. "Look," said the man of God, "there is our handmaid, the eagle, that I spoke to you about. Run, and see what provision God hath sent us, and come again and tell me." The boy ran, and found a good-sized fish, which the eagle had just caught. But the man of God reproved him, "What have you done, my son? Why have you not given part to God's handmaid? Cut the fish in two pieces, and give her one, as her service well deserves." He did as he was bidden, and carried the other part with him on his journey. When the time for eating was come, they turned aside to a certain village, and having given the fish to be cooked, made an excellent repast, and gave also to their entertainers, whilst Cuthbert preached to them the word of God, and blessed Him for his mercies; for happy is the man whose hope is in the name of the Lord, and who has not looked upon vanity and foolish deceit. After this, they resumed their journey, to preach to those among whom they were going.

CHAPTER XIII.

HOW HE FORESAW A VISION OF A FIRE COMING FROM THE DEVIL WHILST HE WAS PREACHING, AND HOW HE PUT OUT THE SAME.

About the same time, as he was preaching the word of life to a number of persons assembled in a certain village, he suddenly saw in the spirit our old enemy coming to retard the work of salvation, and forthwith began by admonitions to prevent the snares and devices which he saw were coming. “Dearest brethren,” said he, “as often as you hear the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom preached to you, you should listen with attentive heart and with watchful feelings, lest the devil, who has a thousand ways of harming you, prevent you by superfluous cares from hearing the word of salvation.” As he said these words, he resumed the thread of his discourse, and immediately that wicked enemy, bringing supernatural fire, set light to a neighbouring house, so that flakes of fire seemed to fly through the air, and a storm of wind and thunder shook the sky. Nearly the whole multitude rushed forward, to extinguish the fire, (for he restrained a few of them himself,) but yet with all their real water they could not put out the false flames, until, at Cuthbert’s prayer, the author of the deceit was put to flight, and his fictitious fires dispersed along with him. The multitude, seeing this, were suffused with ingenuous blushes, and, falling on their knees before him, prayed to be forgiven for their fickleness of mind, acknowledging their conviction that the devil never rests even for an hour from impeding the work of man’s salvation. But he, encouraging them under their infirmity, again began to preach to them the words of everlasting life.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW, WHEN A HOUSE WAS REALLY SET ON FIRE, HE PUT OUT THE FLAMES BY PRAYER.

BUT it was not only in the case of an apparition of a fire that his power was shown; for he extinguished a real fire by the fervency of his tears, when many had failed in putting it out with all the water they could get. For, as he was travelling about, preaching salvation, like the apostles of old, he one day entered the house of a pious woman, whom he was in the habit of often visiting, and whom, from having been nursed by her in his infancy, he was accustomed on that account to call his mother. The house was at the west end of the village, and Cuthbert had no sooner entered it to preach the word of God, than a house at the other end of the place caught fire and began to blaze most dreadfully. For the wind was from the same quarter, so that the sparks from the kindled thatch flew over the whole village. Those who were present tried to extinguish it with water, but were driven back by the heat. Then the aforesaid handmaid of the Lord, running to the house where Cuthbert was, besought him to help them, before her own house and the others in the village should be destroyed. "Do not fear, mother," said he; "be of good cheer; this devouring flame will not hurt either you or yours." He then went out and threw himself prostrate on the ground before the door. Whilst he was praying, the wind changed, and beginning to blow from the west, removed all danger of the fire assailing the house, into which the man of God had entered.

And thus in two miracles he imitated the virtues of two of the fathers. For in the case of the apparition of fire above mentioned, he imitated the reverend and holy father Saint Benedict, who by his prayers drove away the apparition of a fire like a burning kitchen, which the old enemy had presented before the eyes of his disciples: and, in the case of the real fire which he thus extinguished, he imitated that venerable priest Marcellinus of Ancona, who, when his native town was on fire, placed himself in front of the flames, and put them out by his prayers, though all the exertions of his fellow-countrymen had failed to extinguish them with water. Nor is it wonderful that such perfect and pious servants of God should receive power against the force of fire, considering that by their daily piety they enable themselves to conquer the desires of the flesh, and to extinguish all the fiery darts of the wicked one: and to them is applicable the saying of the prophet, "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the fire kindle upon thee." But I, and those who are, like me, conscious of our own weakness and inertness, are sure that we can do nothing in that way against material fire, and, indeed, are by no means sure that we shall be able to escape unhurt from that fire of future punishment, which never shall be extinguished. But the love of our Saviour is strong and abundant, and will bestow the grace of its protection

upon us, though we are unworthy and unable in this world to extinguish the fires of vicious passions and of punishment in the world which is to come.

CHAPTER XV.

HOW HE CAST OUT A DEVIL FROM THE PRÆFECT'S WIFE, EVEN BEFORE HIS ARRIVAL.

But, as we have above related how this venerable man prevailed against the false stratagems of the devil, now let us show in what way he displayed his power against his open and undisguised enmity. There was a certain præfect of King Egfrid, Hildemer by name, a man devoted with all his house to good works, and therefore especially beloved by Saint Cuthbert, and often visited by him whenever he was journeying that way. This man's wife, who was devoted to almsgiving and other fruits of virtue, was suddenly so afflicted by a devil, that she gnashed her teeth, uttered the most pitiable cries, and, throwing about her arms and limbs, caused great terror to all who saw or heard her. Whilst she was lying in this state, and expected to die, her husband mounted his horse, and, coming to the man of God, besought his help, saying, "My wife is ill, and at the point of death: I entreat you to send a priest to visit her before she dies, and minister to her the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ; and, also, that when she is dead, she may be buried in this holy place." He was ashamed to say that she was out of her senses, because the man of God had always seen her in her right mind. Whilst the holy man was going to find out a priest to send to her, he reflected in his mind that it was no ordinary infirmity, but a visitation of the devil; and so, returning to the man who had come to entreat him in his wife's behalf, he said, "I will not send any one, but I will go myself to visit her."

Whilst they were going, the man began to cry, and the tears ran down his cheeks, for he was afraid lest Cuthbert, finding her afflicted with a devil, should think that she had been a false servant of the Lord, and that her faith was not real. The man of God consoled him: "Do not weep because I am likely to find your wife otherwise than I could wish; for I know that she is vexed with a devil, though you are afraid to name it: and I know, moreover, that, before we arrive, she will be freed, and come to meet us, and will herself take the reins, as sound in mind as ever, and will invite us in and minister to us as before; for not only the wicked but the innocent are sometimes permitted by God to be afflicted in body, and are even taken captive in spirit by the devil." Whilst he thus consoled the man, they approached the house, and the evil spirit fled, not able to meet the coming of the holy man. The woman, freed from her suffering, rose up immediately, as if from sleep, and, meeting the man of God with joy, held the bridle of his horse, and, having entirely recovered her strength, both of mind and body, begged him to dismount and to bestow his blessing upon her house; and ministering sedulously to him, testified openly that, at the first touch of the rein, she had felt herself relieved from all the pain of her former suffering.

CHAPTER XVI.

HOW HE LIVED AND TAUGHT IN THE MONASTERY OF LINDISFARNE.

Whilst this venerable servant of the Lord was thus, during many years, distinguishing himself by such signs of spiritual excellence in the monastery of Melrose, its reverend abbot, Eata, transferred him to the monastery in the island of Lindisfarne, that there also he might teach the rules of monastic perfection with the authority of its governor, and illustrate it by the example of his virtue; for the same reverend abbot had both monasteries under his jurisdiction. And no one should wonder that, though the island of Lindisfarne is small, we have above made mention of a bishop, and now of an abbot and monks; for the case is really so. For the same island, inhabited by servants of the Lord, contains both, and all are monks. For Aidan, who was the first bishop of that place, was a monk, and with all his followers lived according to the monastic rule. Wherefore all the principals of that place from him to the present time exercise the episcopal office; so that, whilst the monastery is governed by the abbot, whom they, with the consent of the brethren, have elected, all the priests, deacons, singers, readers, and other ecclesiastical officers of different ranks, observe the monastic rule in every respect, as well as the bishop himself. The blessed Pope Gregory showed that he approved this mode of life, when, in answer to Augustine, his first missionary to Britain, who asked him how bishops ought to converse with their clerks, among other remarks he replied, "Because, my brother, having been educated in the monastic rule, you ought not to keep aloof from your clerks: in the English Church, which, thanks be to God, has lately been converted to the faith, you should institute the same system, which has existed from the first beginning of our Church among our ancestors, none of whom said that the things which he possessed were his own, but they had all things common." When Cuthbert, therefore, came to the church or monastery of Lindisfarne, he taught the brethren monastic rules both by his life and doctrines, and often going round, as was his custom, among the neighbouring people, he kindled them up to seek after and work out a heavenly reward. Moreover, by his miracles he became more and more celebrated, and by the earnestness of his prayers restored to their former health many that were afflicted with various infirmities and sufferings; some that were vexed with unclean spirits, he not only cured whilst present by touching them, praying over them, or even by commanding or exorcising the devils to go out of them; but even when absent he restored them by his prayers, or by foretelling that they should be restored; amongst whom also was the wife of the præfect above mentioned.

There were some brethren in the monastery who preferred their ancient customs to the new regular discipline. But he got the better of these by his

patience and modest virtues, and by daily practice at length brought them to the better system which he had in view. Moreover, in his discussions with the brethren, when he was fatigued by the bitter taunts of those who opposed him, he would rise from his seat with a placid look, and dismiss the meeting until the following day, when, as if he had suffered no repulse, he would use the same exhortations as before, until he converted them, as I have said before, to his own views. For his patience was most exemplary, and in enduring the opposition which was heaped equally upon his mind and body, he was most resolute, and, amid the asperities which he encountered, he always exhibited such placidity of countenance, as made it evident to all that his outward vexations were compensated for by the internal consolations of the Holy Spirit.

But he was so zealous in watching and praying, that he is believed to have sometimes passed three or four nights together therein, during which time he neither went to his own bed, nor had any accommodation from the brethren for reposing himself. For he either passed the time alone, praying in some retired spot, or singing and making something with his hands, thus beguiling his sleepiness by labour; or, perhaps, he walked round the island, diligently examining every thing therein, and by this exercise relieved the tediousness of psalmody and watching. Lastly, he would reprove the faintheartedness of the brethren, who took it amiss if any one came and unseasonably importuned them to awake at night or during their afternoon naps. "No one," said he, "can displease me by waking me out of my sleep, but, on the contrary, give me pleasure; for, by rousing me from inactivity, he enables me to do or think of something useful." So devout and zealous was he in his desire after heavenly things, that, whilst officiating in the solemnity of the mass, he never could come to the conclusion thereof without a plentiful shedding of tears. But whilst he duly discharged the mysteries of our Lord's passion, he would, in himself, illustrate that in which he was officiating; in contrition of heart he would sacrifice himself to the Lord; and whilst he exhorted the standers-by to lift up their hearts and to give thanks unto the Lord, his own heart was lifted up rather than his voice, and it was the spirit which groaned within him rather than the note of singing. In his zeal for righteousness he was fervid to correct sinners, he was gentle in the spirit of mildness to forgive the penitent, so that he would often shed tears over those who confessed their sins, pitying their weaknesses, and would himself point out by his own righteous example what course the sinner should pursue. He used vestments of the ordinary description, neither noticeable for their too great neatness, nor yet too slovenly. Wherefore, even to this day, it is not customary in that monastery for any one to wear vestments of a rich or valuable colour, but they are content with that appearance which the natural wool of the sheep presents.

By these and such like spiritual exercises, this venerable man both excited the good to follow his example, and recalled the wicked and perverse from their errors to regularity of life.

CHAPTER XVII.

OF THE HABITATION WHICH HE MADE FOR HIMSELF IN THE ISLAND OF FARNE, WHEN HE HAD EXPELLED THE DEVILS.

When he had remained some years in the monastery, he was rejoiced to be able at length, with the blessing of the abbot and brethren accompanying him, to retire to the secrecy of solitude which he had so long coveted. He rejoiced that from the long conversation with the world he was now thought worthy to be promoted to retirement and Divine contemplation: he rejoiced that he now could reach to the condition of those of whom it is sung by the Psalmist: "The holy shall walk from virtue to virtue; the God of Gods shall be seen in Zion." At his first entrance upon the solitary life, he sought out the most retired spot in the outskirts of the monastery. But when he had for some time contended with the invisible adversary with prayer and fasting in this solitude, he then, aiming at higher things, sought out a more distant field for conflict, and more remote from the eyes of men. There is a certain island called Farne, in the middle of the sea, not made an island, like Lindisfarne, by the flow of the tide, which the Greeks call rheuma, and then restored to the mainland at its ebb, but lying off several miles to the East, and, consequently, surrounded on all sides by the deep and boundless ocean. No one, before God's servant Cuthbert, had ever dared to inhabit this island alone, on account of the evil spirits which reside there: but when this servant of Christ came, armed with the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, all the fiery darts of the wicked were extinguished, and that wicked enemy, with all his followers, were put to flight.

Christ's soldier, therefore, having thus, by the expulsion of the tyrants, become the lawful monarch of the land, built a city fit for his empire, and houses therein suitable to his city. The building is almost of a round form, from wall to wall about four or five poles in extent: the wall on the outside is higher than a man, but within, by excavating the rock, he made it much deeper, to prevent the eyes and the thoughts from wandering, that the mind might be wholly bent on heavenly things, and the pious inhabitant might behold nothing from his residence but the heavens above him. The wall was constructed, not of hewn stones or of brick and mortar, but of rough stones and turf, which had been taken out from the ground within. Some of them were so large that four men could hardly have lifted them, but Cuthbert himself, with angels helping him, had raised them up and placed them on the wall. There were two chambers in the house, one an oratory, the other for domestic purposes. He finished the walls of them by digging round and cutting away the natural soil within and without, and formed the roof out of rough poles and straw. Moreover, at the landing-place of the island he built a large house, in which the brethren who visited him might be received and rest

themselves, and not far from it there was a fountain of water for their use.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HOW BY HIS PRAYERS HE DREW WATER FROM THE DRY GROUND, AND HOW HE GOT ON DURING HIS RETIREMENT.

But his own dwelling was destitute of water, being built on hard and stony ground. The man of God, therefore, sent for the brethren, for he had not yet withdrawn himself entirely from the sight of visitors, and said to them, “You see that my dwelling is destitute of water; but I pray you, let us beseech Him who turned the solid rock into a pool of water and stones into fountains, that giving glory, not to us, but to his own name, He may vouchsafe to open to us a spring of water, even from this stony rock. Let us dig in the middle of my hut, and, I believe, out of his good pleasure, He will give us drink.” They therefore made a pit, and the next morning found it full of water, springing up from within. Wherefore there can be no doubt that it was elicited by the prayers of this man of God from the ground which was before dry and stony. Now this water, by a most remarkable quality, never overflowed its first limits so as to flood the pavement, nor yet ever failed, however much of it might be taken out; so that it never surpassed or fell short of the daily necessities of him who used it for his sustenance.

Now when Cuthbert had, with the assistance of the brethren, made for himself this dwelling with its chambers, he began to live in a more secluded manner. At first, indeed, when the brethren came to visit him, he would leave his cell and minister to them. He used to wash their feet devoutly with warm water, and was sometimes compelled by them to take off his shoes, that they might wash his feet also. For he had so far withdrawn his mind from attending to the care of his person, and fixed it upon the concerns of his soul, that he would often spend whole months without taking off his leathern gaiters. Sometimes, too, he would keep his shoes on from one Easter to another, only taking them off on account of the washing of feet, which then takes place at the Lord’s Supper. Wherefore, in consequence of his frequent prayers and genuflexions, which he made with his shoes on, he was discovered to have contracted a callosity on the junction of his feet and legs. At length, as his zeal after perfection grew, he shut himself up in his cell away from the sight of men, and spent his time alone in fasting, watching, and prayer, rarely having communication with any one without, and that through the window, which at first was left open, that he might see and be seen; but, after a time, he shut that also, and opened it only to give his blessing, or for any other purpose of absolute necessity.

CHAPTER XIX.

HOW HE SOWED A FIELD WITH BARLEY, AND KEPT OFF THE BIRDS FROM THE CROP BY HIS MERE WORD.

AT first, indeed, he received from his visitors a small portion of bread, and drank water from the fountain; but afterwards he thought it more fitting to live by the labour of his own hands, like the old fathers. He therefore asked them to bring him some instruments of husbandry, and some wheat to sow; but when he had sown the grain in the spring, it did not come up. At the next visit of the monks, he said to them, "Perhaps the nature of the soil, or the will of God, does not allow wheat to grow in this place: bring me, I beg of you, some barley: possibly that may answer. If, however, on trial it does not, I had better return to the monastery than be supported here by the labour of others." The barley was accordingly brought, and sown, although the season was extraordinarily late; and the barley came up most unexpectedly and most abundantly. It no sooner began to ripen, than the birds came and wasted it most grievously. Christ's holy servant, as he himself afterwards told it, (for he used, in a cheerful and affable manner, to confirm the faith of his hearers by telling them the mercies which his own faith had obtained from the Lord,) drew near to the birds, and said to them, "Why do you touch that which you have not sown? Have you more share than I in this? If you have received license from God, do what He allows you; but if not, get you gone, and do no further injury to that which belongs to another." He had no sooner spoken, than all the flock of birds departed, and never more returned to feed upon that field. Thus in two miracles did this reverend servant of Christ imitate the example of two of the fathers: for, in drawing water from the rock, he followed the holy St. Benedict, who did almost the same thing, and in the same way, though more abundantly, because there were more who were in want of water. And in driving away the birds, he imitated the reverend and holy father St. Antony, who by his word alone drove away the wild asses from the garden which he had planted.

CHAPTER XX.

HOW THE CROWS APOLOGIZED TO THE MAN OF GOD FOR THE INJURY WHICH THEY DID HIM, AND MADE HIM A PRESENT IN COMPENSATION.

I AM here tempted to relate another miracle which he wrought in imitation of the aforesaid father St. Benedict, in which the obedience and humility of birds are a warning to the perversity and pride of mankind. There were some crows which had long been accustomed to build in the island. One day the man of God saw them, whilst making their nests, pull out the thatch of the hut which he had made to entertain the brethren in, and carry it away to build with. He immediately stretched out his hand, and warned them to do no harm to the brethren. As they neglected his command, he said to them, "In the name of Jesus Christ, depart as speedily as possible, and do not presume to remain any longer in the place, to which you are doing harm." He had scarcely uttered these words, when they flew away in sorrow. At the end of three days one of the two returned, and finding the man of God digging in the field, spread out its wings in a pitiable manner, and bending its head down before his feet, in a tone of humility asked pardon by the most expressive signs it could, and obtained from the reverend father permission to return. It then departed and fetched its companion; and when they had both arrived, they brought in their beaks a large piece of hog's lard, which the man of God used to show to the brethren who invited him, and kept to grease their shoes with; testifying to them how earnestly they should strive after humility, when a dumb bird that had acted so insolently, hastened by prayers, lamentation, and presents, to obliterate the injury which it had done to man. Lastly, as a pattern of reformation to the human race, these birds remained for many years and built their nests in the island, and did not dare to give annoyance to any one. But let no one think it absurd to learn virtue from birds; for Solomon says, "Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways, and be wise."

CHAPTER XXI.

HOW EVEN THE SEA WAS SUBSERVIENT TO HIS WANTS.

BUT not only did the animals of the air and sea, for the sea itself, as the air and fire, on former occasions which we have mentioned, exemplified their obedience to the venerable man. For it is no wonder that every creature should obey his wishes, who so faithfully, and with his whole heart, obeyed the great Author of all creatures. But we for the most part have lost our dominion over the creation that has been subjected to us, because we neglect to obey the Lord and Creator of all things. The sea itself, I say, displayed the most ready obedience to Christ's servant, when he had need of it. For he intended to build a little room in his monastery, adapted to his daily necessities; and on the side towards the sea, where the waves had scooped a hollow, it was necessary to put some support across the opening, which was twelve feet wide. He therefore asked the brethren, who came to visit him, when they returned the next time, to bring him a beam twelve feet long, to support his intended building. They readily promised to bring it, and having received his blessing, departed; but by the time they reached home they had entirely forgotten the matter, and on their next visit neglected to carry the timber which they had promised. He received them mildly, and giving them welcome in God's name, asked them for the wood which he had requested them to bring. Then they, remembering what they had promised, apologized for their forgetfulness. Cuthbert, in the most gentle manner, pacified them, and requested them to sleep there, and remain till the morning; "for," said he, "I do not think that God will forget my service or my necessities." They accepted his invitation; and when they rose in the morning, they saw that the tide had, during the night, brought on shore a beam of the required size, and placed it exactly in the situation where the proposed chamber was to be built. When they saw this, they marvelled at the holiness of the venerable man, for that even the elements obeyed him, and took much shame to themselves for their forgetfulness and sloth, who were taught even by the senseless elements what obedience ought to be shown to God's holy saints.

CHAPTER XXII.

HOW HE GAVE SALUTARY ADMONITIONS TO MANY WHO CAME TO HIM, AND EXPOSED THE IMPOTENT SNARES OF THE OLD ENEMY.

BUT many came to the man of God, not only from the furthest parts of Lindisfarne, but even from the more remote parts of Britain, led thither by the fame of his virtues, to confess the errors which they had committed, or the temptations of the devil which they suffered, or the adversities common to mortals, with which they were afflicted, and all hoping to receive consolation from a man so eminent for holiness. Nor did their hope deceive them. For no one went away from him without consolation, no one returned afflicted with the same grief which had brought him thither. For he knew how to comfort the sorrowful with pious exhortation; he could recal the joys of celestial life to the memory of those who were straitened in circumstances, and show the uncertainty of prosperity and adversity in this life: he had learnt to make known to those who were tempted the numerous wiles of their ancient enemy, by which that mind would be easily captivated which was deprived of brotherly or Divine love; whereas, the mind which, strengthened by the true faith, should continue its course, would, by the help of God, break the snares of the adversary like the threads of a spider's web. "How often," said he, "have they sent me headlong from the high rock! How many times have they thrown stones at me as if to kill me! Yea, they sought to discourage me by various trials of apparitions, and to exterminate me from this scene of trial, but were never able to affect my body with injury, or my mind with fear."

He was accustomed to relate these things more frequently to the brotherhood, lest they should wonder at his conversation as being peculiarly exalted, because, despising secular cares, he preferred to live apart. "But," said he, "the life of monks may well be wondered at, who are subjected in all things to the orders of the abbot, the times of watching, praying, fasting, and working, being all regulated according to his will; many of whom have I known far exceed my littleness, both in purity of mind and advancement in prophetic grace. Among whom must I mention, with all honour, the venerable Boisil, servant of Christ, who, when an old man, formerly supported me in my youth at Melrose Abbey, and while instructing me, he foretold, with prophetic truth, all things which would happen to me; and of all things which he foretold to me, one alone remains which I hope may never be accomplished." Cuthbert told us this was a prophecy of Boisil, that this, our holy servant of Christ, should attain to the office of a bishop; though he, in his eagerness after the heavenly life, felt horrified at the announcement.

CHAPTER XXIII.

HOW ELFLED THE ABBESS AND ONE OF HER NUNS WERE CURED OF AN INFIRMITY BY MEANS OF HIS GIRDLE.

BUT though our man of God was thus secluded from mankind, yet he did not cease from working miracles and curing those who were sick. For a venerable handmaid of Christ, Elfled by name, who, amid the joys of virginity, devoted her motherly care and piety to several companies of Christ's handmaids, and added to the lustre of her princely birth the brighter excellence of exalted virtue, was inspired with much love towards the holy man of God. About this time, as she afterwards told the reverend Herefrid, presbyter of the church of Lindisfarne, who related it to me, she was afflicted with a severe illness and suffered long, insomuch that she seemed almost at the gates of death. The physicians could do her no good, when, on a sudden, the Divine grace worked within her, and she by degrees was saved from death, though not fully cured. The pain in her inside left her, the strength of her limbs returned, but the power of standing and walking was still denied her; for she could not support herself on her feet, nor move from place to place, save on all fours. Her sorrow was, therefore, great; and she never expected to recover from her weakness, for she had long abandoned all hope from the physicians. One day, as she was indulging her bitter thoughts, she turned her mind to the holy and tranquil life of the reverend father Cuthbert; and expressed a wish that she had in her possession some article that had belonged to him; "for I know, and am confident," said she, "that I should soon be well." Not long after this, there came a person who brought with him a linen girdle from Saint Cuthbert: she was overjoyed at the gift, and perceiving that Heaven had revealed to the saint her wish, she put it on, and the next morning found herself able to stand upon her feet. On the third day she was restored to perfect health.

A few days after, one of the virgins of the same monastery was taken ill with a violent pain in the head; and whilst the complaint became so much worse that she thought she should die, the venerable abbess went in to see her. Seeing her sorely afflicted, she brought the girdle of the man of God to her, and bound it round her head. The same day the pain in the head left her, and she laid up the girdle in her chest. The abbess wanted it again a few days after, but it could not be found either in the chest or anywhere else. It was at once perceived that Divine Providence had so ordered it, that the sanctity of the man of God might be established by these two miracles, and all occasion of doubting thereof be removed from the incredulous. For if the girdle had remained, all those who were sick would have gone to it, and whilst some of them would be unworthy of being cured, its efficacy to cure might have been denied; whereas their own unworthiness would have been to blame. Wherefore, as I said before, Heaven so dealt forth its benevolence from on

high, that when the faith of believers had been strengthened, all matter for detraction was forthwith removed from the malice of the unrighteous.

CHAPTER XXIV.

OF HIS PROPHECY IN ANSWER TO THE SAME ELFLIED, CONCERNING THE LIFE OF KING EGFRID AND HIS OWN BISHOPRIC.

AT another time, the same Elfled, who was a most holy virgin, and mother of the virgins of Christ, sent for the man of God, adjuring him in the name of our Lord that she might be allowed to see him and to speak about certain things of importance. He therefore entered with the brethren into a ship, and went over to an island which is situated in the mouth of the river Coquet, from which it received its name. The island was also remarkable for the number of its monks. The abbess, who had requested him to meet her in this island, when she had enjoyed his conversation for some time, and the man of God had answered many questions that she put to him; on a sudden, in the midst of his conversation, she fell at his feet and adjured him, by the terrible and sacred name of our heavenly King and his angels, that he would tell her how long her brother Egfrid would live and govern the English nation. "For I know," she said, "that you abound in the spirit of prophecy, and that, if you are willing, you are able to tell me even this." But he, shuddering at the adjuration, and yet not being willing openly to reveal the secret which she had asked him, replied, "It is a wonderful thing that you, being a wise woman and skilled in sacred Scriptures, should call long the duration of human life: the Psalmist says, that 'our years shall perish like a spider's web,' and Solomon advises, that if a man shall live many years, and shall have been prosperous in all of these, he ought to remember the gloomy time of many days, which when it shall come, the past is convicted of folly; how much more then ought that man, to whose life one year only is wanting, to be considered as having lived a short time when death stands at his door!"

On hearing these words she lamented the dreadful prophecy with many tears; but then having wiped her face, she with feminine boldness adjured him by the majesty of the Holy One, that he would tell her who would be the heir to the kingdom, seeing that Egfrid had neither sons nor brothers. After a short silence, he said, "Do not say that he is without heirs, for he shall have a successor, whom you shall embrace like Egfrid himself with the affection of a sister."—"But," said she, "I beseech you to tell me where he may be found." He answered, "You behold this great and spacious sea, how it aboundeth in islands. It is easy for God out of some of these to provide a person to reign over England." She therefore understood him to speak of Alfrid, who was said to be the son of her father, and was then, on account of his love of literature, exiled to the Scottish islands. But she was aware that Egfrid proposed to make him a bishop, and wishing to know if the effect would follow the intention, she began by inquiring in this manner: "Oh, with what various intentions are

the hearts of men distracted! Some rejoice in having obtained riches, others always eager after them are still in want: but thou rejectest the glory of the world, although it is offered thee; and although thou mightest obtain a bishopric, than which there is nothing more sublime on earth, yet thou preferrest the recesses of thy desert to this rank.”— “But,” said he, “I know that I am not worthy of so high a rank; nevertheless, I cannot shun the judgment of the Supreme Ruler, who, if he decreed that I should subject myself to so great a burden, would, I believe, restore me after a moderate freedom, and perhaps after not more than two years would send me back to my former solitude and quiet. But I must first request you in the name of our Lord and Saviour that you do not relate to any one before my death the things which I have told you.” When he had expounded to her the various things which she asked, and had instructed her concerning the things which she had need of, he returned to his solitary island and monastery, and continued his mode of life as he had commenced it.

Not long after, in a full synod, Archbishop Theodore of blessed memory presiding in the presence of God’s chosen servant, the holy King Egfrid, he was unanimously elected to the bishopric of the see of Lindisfarne. But, although they sent many messengers and letters to him, he could not by any means be drawn from his habitation, until the king himself, above mentioned, sailed to the island, attended by the most holy Bishop Trumwine, and by as many other religious and influential men as he could: they all went down on their knees before him, and adjured him by the Lord, with tears and entreaties, until they drew him away from his retirement with tears in his eyes, and took him to the synod. When arrived there, although much resisting, he was overcome by the unanimous wish of all, and compelled to submit to undertake the duties of the bishopric; yet the ordination did not take place immediately, but at the termination of the winter which was then beginning. And that his prophecies might be fulfilled in all things, Egfrid was killed the year afterwards in battle with the Picts, and was succeeded on the throne by his illegitimate brother Alfrid, who, a few years before, had devoted himself to literature in Scotland, suffering a voluntary exile, to gratify his love of science.

CHAPTER XXV.

HOW, WHEN ELECTED TO THE BISHOPRIC, HE CURED A SERVANT OF ONE OF THE KING'S ATTENDANTS BY MEANS OF HOLY WATER.

When Cuthbert, the man of God, after having been elected to the bishopric, had returned to his island, and for some time had served God in secret with his accustomed devotion, the venerable Bishop Eata called him and requested him to come to an interview with him at Melrose. The conversation being finished, and Cuthbert having commenced his journey homewards, a certain attendant of King Egfrid met him, and besought him that he would turn aside and give a benediction at his house. When he had arrived there, and had received the grateful salutations of all, the man pointed out to him one of his servants who was infirm, saying, "I thank God, most holy father, that you have thought worthy to enter our house to see us, and, indeed, we believe that your arrival will afford us the greatest profit both of mind and body. For there is one of our servants tormented with the worst infirmity, and is this day afflicted with such great pain that he appears more like a man dying than sick. For his extremities being dead, he seems only to breathe a little through his mouth and nostrils." Cuthbert immediately blessed some water, and gave it to a servant whose name was Baldhelm, who is still alive and filling the office of presbyter in the bishopric of Lindisfarne, which he adorns by his good qualities. He also has the faculty of relating in the sweetest manner the virtues of the man of God to all who are desirous of knowing, and it was he that told me the miracle which I relate. The man of God, then, giving him the holy water, said, "Go and give it to the sick man to drink." In obedience to these words he brought the water to the sick man, and when he poured it into his mouth the third time, the sick man, contrary to his usual custom, fell asleep. It was now evening, and he passed the night in silence, and in the morning appeared quite well when his master visited him.

CHAPTER XXVI.

OF HIS MANNER OF LIFE IN HIS BISHOPRIC.

THE venerable man of God, Cuthbert, adorned the office of bishop, which he had undertaken, by the exercise of many virtues, according to the precepts and examples of the Apostles. For he protected the people committed to his care with frequent prayers, and invited them to heavenly things by most wholesome admonitions, and followed that system which most facilitates teaching, by first doing himself what he taught to others. He saved the needy man from the hand of the stronger, and the poor and destitute from those who would oppress them. He comforted the weak and sorrowful; but he took care to recal those who were sinfully rejoicing to that sorrow which is according to godliness. Desiring still to exercise his usual frugality, he did not cease to observe the severity of a monastic life, amid the turmoil by which he was surrounded. He gave food to the hungry, raiment to the shivering, and his course was marked by all the other particulars which adorn the life of a pontiff. The miracles with which he shone forth to the world bore witness to the virtues of his own mind, some of which we have taken care briefly to hand down to memory.

CHAPTER XXVII.

HOW, THOUGH AT A DISTANCE, HE SAW IN SPIRIT THE DEATH OF KING EGFRID, AND THE END OF HIS WARFARE, WHICH HE HAD FORETOLD.

Now, when King Egfrid had rashly led his army against the Picts, and devastated their territories with most atrocious cruelty, the man of God, Cuthbert, knowing that the time was now come, concerning which he had prophesied the year before to his sister, that the king would live only one year more, came to Lugubalia (which is corruptly called by the English Luel) to speak to the queen, who was there awaiting the result of the war in her sister's monastery. But the next day, when the citizens were leading him to see the walls of the town, and the remarkable fountain, formerly built by the Romans, suddenly, as he was resting on his staff, he was disturbed in spirit, and, turning his countenance sorrowfully to the earth, he raised himself, and, lifting his eyes to heaven, groaned loudly, and said in a low voice, "Now, then, the contest is decided!" The presbyter, who was standing near, in incautious haste answered, and said, "How do you know it?" But he, unwilling to declare more concerning those things which were revealed to him, said, "Do you not see how wonderfully the air is changed and disturbed? Who is able to investigate the judgments of the Almighty?" But he immediately entered in and spoke to the queen in private, for it was the Sabbath-day. "Take care," said he, "that you get into your chariot very early on the second day of the week, for it is not lawful to ride in a chariot on the Lord's day; and go quickly to the royal city, lest, perchance, the king may have been slain. But I have been asked to go to-morrow to a neighbouring monastery, to consecrate a church, and will follow you as soon as that duty is finished."

But when the Lord's day was come, whilst he was preaching the word of God to the brethren of the same monastery, the sermon being finished, he began again to teach his listening congregation, as follows:—"I beseech you, my beloved, according to the admonitions of the Apostle, to watch, remain steadfast in the faith, act manfully, and be comforted, that no temptation may find you unprepared, but rather that you may be always mindful of the precept of the Lord Himself, 'Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation.' " But some thought he said this because a pestilence had not long before afflicted them and many others with a great mortality, and that he spoke of this scourge being about to return. But he, resuming his discourse, said, "When I formerly lived alone in my island, some of the brethren came to me on the day of the Holy Nativity, and asked me to go out of my cabin and solemnize with them this joyful and hallowed day. Yielding to their prayers, I went out, and we sat down to feast. But, in the middle of the banquet, I suddenly said to them, 'I beseech you, brethren, let us act cautiously and watchfully, lest, perchance,

through carelessness and a sense of security, we be-led into temptation.' But they answered, 'We entreat you, let us spend a joyful day now, for it is the birthday of our Lord Jesus Christ!' To which I agreed. Some time after this, when we were indulging ourselves in eating, merriment, and conversation, I again began to admonish them that we should be solicitous in prayer and watchfulness, and ever prepared to meet all temptations. But they replied, 'You teach well; nevertheless, as the days of fasting, watching, and prayer are numerous, let us to-day rejoice in the Lord. For the angel manifested great joy to the shepherds when the Lord was born, and told them that it was a day to be celebrated by all people!' 'Well,' said I, 'let us do so.' But when I repeated the words of the same admonition the third time, they perceived that I would not have suggested this so earnestly for no purpose, and said to me in fear, 'Let us do as you teach, for it is incumbent on us to watch in spirit, armed against the snares and temptations of the devil.' When I said these things, I did not know any more than they that any new temptation would happen to us; but I was only admonished, as it were instinctively, that the state of the heart is to be always fortified against the storms of temptations. But when they returned from me to their own home, that is, to the monastery of Lindisfarne, they found that one of their brethren was dead of a pestilence; and the same disease increased, and raged so furiously from day to day, for months, and almost for a whole year, that the greater part of that noble assembly of spiritual fathers and brethren were sent into the presence of the Lord. Now, therefore, my brethren, watch and pray, that if any tribulation assail you, it may find you prepared."

When the venerable man of God, Cuthbert, had said these things, the brethren thought, as I have before stated, that he spoke of a return of the pestilence. But the day after, a man who had escaped from the war explained, by the lamentable news which he brought, the hidden prophecies of the man of God. It appeared that the guards had been slain, and the king cut off by the sword of the enemy, on the very day and hour in which it was revealed to the man of God as he was standing near the well.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

HOW HE FORETOLD HIS OWN DEATH TO HEREBERT, THE HERMIT, AND BY PRAYERS TO GOD OBTAINED HIS ATTENDANCE.

Not very long afterwards, the same servant of God, Cuthbert, was summoned to the same city of Lugubalia, not only to consecrate priests, but also to bless the queen herself with his holy conversation. Now there was a venerable priest of the name of Herebert, who had long been united to the man of God, Cuthbert, in the bond of spiritual friendship, and who, leading a solitary life, in an island in the large marsh from which the Derwent rises, used to come to him every year, and receive from him admonitions in the way of eternal life. When this man heard that he was stopping in that city, he came according to his custom, desiring to be kindled up more and more by his wholesome exhortations in aspiring after heavenly things. When these two had drunk deeply of the cup of celestial wisdom, Cuthbert said, among other things, "Remember, brother Herebert, that you ask me now concerning whatever undertaking you may have in hand, and that you speak to me about it now, because, after we shall have separated, we shall see each other no more in this life. I am certain that the time of my death approaches, and the time of leaving my earthly tenement is at hand." Upon hearing these words, he threw himself at his feet with tears and lamentations, saying, "I beseech you by the Lord not to leave me, but be mindful of your companion, and pray the Almighty Goodness that, as we have served Him together on earth, we may at the same time pass to heaven to see his light. For I have always sought to live according to the command of your mouth; and what I have left undone through ignorance or frailty, I have equally taken care to correct, according to your pleasure." The bishop yielded to his prayers, and immediately learnt in spirit, that he had obtained that which he had sought from the Lord. "Arise, my brother," says he, "and do not lament, but rejoice in gladness, for his great mercy has granted us that which we asked of Him." The event confirmed his promise and the truth of the prophecy; for they never met again, but their souls departed from their bodies at one and the same moment of time, and were joined together in a heavenly vision, and translated at the same time by angels to the heavenly kingdom. But Herebert was first afflicted with a long infirmity, perhaps by a dispensation of holy piety, in order that the continual pain of a long sickness might supply what merit he had less than the blessed Cuthbert, so that being by grace made equal to his intercessor, he might be rendered worthy to depart this life at one and the same hour with him, and to be received into one and the same seat of everlasting happiness.

CHAPTER XXIX.

HOW, THROUGH HIS PRIEST, HE CURED THE WIFE OF AN EARL WITH HOLY WATER.

When he was one day going round his parish to give spiritual admonitions throughout the rural districts, cottages, and villages, and to lay his hand on all the lately baptized, that they might receive the Holy Spirit, he came to the mansion of a certain earl, whose wife lay sick almost unto death. The earl himself, meeting him as he entered, thanked the Lord on his knees for his arrival, and received him with kind hospitality. When his feet and hands were washed, according to the custom of hospitality, and the bishop had sat down, the man began to tell him about the sickness of his wife, who was despaired of, and besought him to consecrate some water to sprinkle on her. "I believe," said he, "that by-and-by she will either, by the grace of God, be restored to health, or else she will pass by death to life eternal, and soon receive a recompense for so heavy and long-continued trouble." The man of God assented to his prayers, and having blessed the water which was brought to him, gave it to the priest, directing him to sprinkle it on the patient. He entered the bedroom in which she lay, as if dead, and sprinkled her and the bed, and poured some of the healing draught down her throat. Oh, wonderful and extraordinary circumstance! the holy water had scarcely touched the patient, who was wholly ignorant what was brought her, than she was so restored to health, both of mind and body, that being come to her senses she blessed the Lord and returned thanks to Him, that He thought her worthy to be visited and healed by such exalted guests. She got up without delay, and being now well, ministered to those who had been instrumental in curing her; and it was extraordinary to see her, who had escaped the bitter cup of death by the bishop's benediction, now the first of the nobleman's family to offer him refreshment, following the example of the mother-in-law of the Apostle Peter, who, being cured of a fever by the Lord, arose forthwith and ministered unto Him and his disciples.

CHAPTER XXX.

HOW HE CURED A GIRL OF A PAIN IN THE HEAD AND SIDE BY ANOINTING HER WITH OIL.

But the venerable Bishop Cuthbert effected a cure similar to this, of which there were many eye-witnesses, one of whom is the religious priest, Ethelwald, at that time attendant on the man of God, but now abbot of the monastery of Melrose. Whilst, according to his custom, he was travelling and teaching all, he arrived at a certain village, in which were a few holy women, who had fled from their monastery through fear of the barbarian army, and had there obtained a habitation from the man of God a short time before: one of whom, a sister of the above-mentioned priest, Ethelwald, was confined with a most grievous sickness; for during a whole year she had been troubled with an intolerable pain in the head and side, which the physicians utterly despaired of curing. But when they told the man of God about her, and entreated him to cure her, he in pity anointed the wretched woman with holy oil. From that time she began to get better, and was well in a few days.

CHAPTER XXXI.

HOW HE CURED AN INFIRM MAN BY CONSECRATED BREAD.

I MUST not here pass over a miracle which was told to me as having been worked by his holiness, though he himself was absent. We mentioned a prefect of the name of Hildemer, whose wife the man of God freed from an unclean spirit. The same prefect afterwards fell seriously ill, so that his malady daily increased, and he was confined to his bed, apparently near death. Many of his friends were present who had come to console him in his sickness. Whilst they were sitting by the bedside, one of them mentioned that he had with him some consecrated bread which Cuthbert had given him: "And I think," said he, "that if we were in faith to give him this to eat, nothing doubting, he would be well." All present were laymen, but at the same time very pious men, and turning to one another, they professed their faith, without doubting, that by partaking of that same consecrated bread he might be well. They therefore filled a cup with water, and putting a little of the bread into it, gave it him to drink: the water thus hallowed by the bread no sooner touched his stomach than all his inward pain left him, and the wasting of his outward members ceased. A perfect recovery speedily ensued, and both himself and the others who saw or heard the rapidity of this wonderful cure were thereby stirred up to praise the holiness of Christ's servant, and to admire the virtues of his true faith.

CHAPTER XXXII.

HOW, BY PRAYER, HE RESTORED TO LIFE A YOUNG MAN WHOM HE FOUND AT THE POINT OF DEATH ON A JOURNEY.

AS this holy shepherd of Christ's flock was going round visiting his folds, he came to a mountainous and wild place, where many people had got together from all the adjoining villages, that he might lay his hands upon them. But among the mountains no fit church or place could be found to receive the bishop and his attendants. They therefore pitched tents for him in the road, and each cut branches from the trees in the neighbouring wood to make for himself the best sort of covering that he was able. Two days did the man of God preach to the assembled crowds; and minister the grace of the Holy Spirit by imposition of hands upon those that were regenerate in Christ; when, on a sudden, there appeared some women bearing on a bed a young man, wasted by severe illness, and having placed him down at the outlet of the wood, sent to the bishop, requesting permission to bring him, that he might receive a blessing from the holy man. When he was brought near, the bishop perceived that his sufferings were great, and ordered all to retire to a distance. He then betook himself to his usual weapon, prayer, and bestowing his blessing, expelled the fever, which all the care and medicines of the physicians had not been able to cure. In short, he rose up the same hour, and having refreshed himself with food, and given thanks to God, walked back to the women who had brought him. And so it came to pass, that whereas they had in sorrow brought the sick man thither, he now returned home with them, safe and well, and all rejoicing, both he and they alike.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

HOW, AT A TIME OF SICKNESS, HE RESTORED A DYING BOY IN HEALTH TO HIS MOTHER.

At the same time the plague made great ravages in those parts, so that there were scarcely any inhabitants left in villages and places which had been thickly populated, and some towns were wholly deserted. The holy father Cuthbert, therefore, went round his parish, most assiduously ministering the word of God, and comforting those few who were left. But being arrived at a certain village, and having there exhorted all whom he found there, he said to his attendant priest, "Do you think that any one remains who has need that we should visit and converse with him? or have we now seen all here, and shall we go elsewhere?" The priest looked about, and saw a woman standing afar off, one of whose sons had died but a little time before, and she was now supporting another at the point of death, whilst the tears trickling down her cheek bore witness to her past and present affliction. He pointed her out to the man of God, who immediately went to her, and, blessing the boy, kissed him, and said to his mother, "Do not fear nor be sorrowful; for your child shall be healed and live, and no one else of your household shall die of this pestilence." To the truth of which prophecy the mother and son, who lived a long time after that, bore witness.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

HOW HE SAW THE SOUL OF A MAN, WHO HAD BEEN KILLED BY FALLING FROM A TREE, ASCEND TO HEAVEN.

BUT now this man of God, foreseeing his end approaching, had determined to lay aside the duties of his pastoral office, and return to his former solitary life, that by shaking off the cares of this life he might occupy himself amidst unrestrained psalmody and prayer in preparing for the day of his death, or rather of his entrance into everlasting life. He wished first to go round his parishes, and visit the houses of the faithful in his neighbourhood; and then, when he had confirmed all with such consolatory admonitions as should be required, to return to the solitary abode which he so longed after. Meanwhile, at the request of the noble and holy virgin, the Abbess Elfleda, of whom I have before made mention, he entered the estate belonging to her monastery, both to speak to her and also to consecrate a church therein; for there was there a considerable number of monks. When they had taken their seats, at the hour of repast, on a sudden Cuthbert turned away his thoughts from the carnal food to the contemplation of heavenly things. His limbs being much fatigued by his previous duties, the colour of his face changed, his eyes became unusually fixed, and the knife dropped from his hands upon the table. The priest, who stood by and ministered to him, perceiving this, said to the abbess, "Ask the bishop what he has just seen: for I know there was some reason for his hand thus trembling and letting fall the knife, whilst his countenance also changed so wonderfully: he has surely seen something which we have not seen." She immediately turned to him and said, "I pray you, my lord bishop, tell me what you have just seen, for your tired hand did not let fall the knife just now without some cause." The bishop endeavoured to conceal the fact of his having seen any thing supernatural, and replied in joke, "I was not able to eat the whole day, was I? I must have left off some time or other." But, when she persisted in her entreaty that he would tell the vision, he said, "I saw the soul of a holy man carried up to heaven in the arms of angels."—"From what place," said she, "was it taken?"—"From your monastery," replied the bishop; upon which she further asked his name. "You will tell it me," said he, "to-morrow, when I am celebrating mass." On hearing these words, she immediately sent to the larger monastery to inquire who had been lately removed from the body. The messenger, finding all safe and well, was preparing to return in the morning to his mistress, when he met some men carrying in a cart the body of a deceased brother to be buried. On inquiring who it was, he found that it was one of the shepherds, a worthy man, who, having incautiously mounted a tree, had fallen down, and died from the bruise, at the same time that the man of God had seen the vision. He immediately went and told the circumstance to his mistress, who went

forthwith to the bishop, at that time consecrating the church, and in amazement, as if she were going to tell him something new and doubtful, “I pray,” said she, “my lord bishop, remember in the mass my servant Hadwald,” (for that was his name,) “who died yesterday by falling from a tree.” It was then plain to all that the holy man possessed in his mind an abundant spirit of prophecy; for that he saw before his eyes at the moment the man’s soul carried to heaven, and knew beforehand what was afterwards going to be told him by others.

CHAPTER XXXV.

HOW HE CHANGED WATER BY TASTING IT, SO THAT IT HAD THE FLAVOUR OF WINE.

When he had gone regularly through the upper districts, he came to a nunnery, which we have before mentioned, not far from the mouth of the river Tyne; where he was magnificently entertained by Christ's servant, Abbess Verca, — a woman of a most noble character, both in spiritual and temporal concerns. When they rose from their afternoon repose, he said he was thirsty, and asked for drink. They inquired of him what he would have, whether they should bring him wine, or beer. "Give me water," said he; and they brought him a draught from the fountain. But he, when he had given thanks and tasted it, gave it to his attendant priest, who returned it to the servant. The man, taking the cup, asked if he might drink out of the same cup as the bishop. "Certainly," said the priest, "why not?" Now that priest also belonged to the same monastery. He therefore drank, and the water seemed to him to taste like wine. Upon which he gave the cup to the brother who was standing near, that he might be a witness of so great a miracle; and to him also the taste seemed, without a doubt, to be that of wine. They looked at one another in amazement; and when they found time to speak, they acknowledged to one another that they had never tasted better wine. I give this on the authority of one of them, who stopped some time in our monastery at Weremouth, and now lies buried there.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

HOW SOME OF THE BRETHREN, FOR DISOBEDIENCE TO HIM, WERE DETAINED BY A STORM AT SEA.

When Cuthbert had passed two years in the episcopal office, knowing in spirit that his last day was at hand, he divested himself of his episcopal duties and returned to his much-loved solitude, that he might there occupy his time in extracting the thorns of the flesh, and kindle up to greater brightness the flame of his former humility. At this time he was accustomed to go out frequently from his cell, and converse with the brethren, who came to visit him. I will here mention a miracle which he then wrought, in order that it may be more evident to all men what obedience should be rendered to his saints, even in the case of commands which they seem to have given with carelessness or indifference. He had one day left his cell, to give advice to some visitors; and when he had finished, he said to them, "I must now go in again; but do you, as you are inclined to depart, first take food; and when you have cooked and eaten that goose, which is hanging on the wall, go on board your vessel in God's name, and return home." He then uttered a prayer, and, having blessed them, went in. But they, as he had bidden them, took some food; but having enough provisions of their own, which they had brought with them, they did not touch the goose.

Now when they had refreshed themselves, they tried to go on board their vessel, but a sudden storm utterly prevented them from putting to sea. They were thus detained seven days in the island by the roughness of the waves, and yet they could not call to mind what fault they had committed. They therefore returned to have an interview with the holy father, and to lament to him their detention. He exhorted them to be patient, and on the seventh day came out to console their sorrow, and give them pious exhortations. When, however, he had entered the house in which they were stopping, and saw that the goose was not eaten, he reproved their disobedience with mild countenance and in gentle language. "Have you not left the goose still hanging in its place? What wonder is it that the storm has prevented your departure? Put it immediately into the caldron, and boil and eat it, that the sea may become tranquil, and you may return home."

They immediately did as he had commanded; and it happened most wonderfully that the moment the kettle began to boil, the wind began to cease, and the waves to be still. Having finished their repast, and seeing that the sea was calm, they went on board, and, to their great delight, though with shame for their neglect, reached home with a fair wind. Their shame arose from their disobedience and dulness of comprehension, whereby, amid the chastening of their Maker, they were unable to perceive and to correct their error. They rejoiced, because they now saw what care God had for his faithful servant, so

as to vindicate him from neglect, even by means of the elements. They rejoiced, too, that the Lord should have had so much regard to themselves, as to correct their offences even by an open miracle. Now this, which I have related, I did not pick up from any chance authority, but I had it from one of those who were present, — a most reverend monk and priest of the same monastery, Cynemund, who still lives, known to many in the neighbourhood for his years and the purity of his life.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

OF THE TEMPTATIONS WHICH HE UNDERWENT IN HIS SICKNESS, AND HIS ORDERS CONCERNING HIS BURIAL.

THE solemn day of the nativity of our Lord was scarcely over, when the man of God, Cuthbert, returned to his dwelling on the island. A crowd of monks were standing by as he entered into the ship; and one of them, an old and venerable monk, strong in faith but weak in body, in consequence of a dysentery, said to him, "Tell us, my lord bishop, when we may hope for your return." To this plain question, he replied as plainly, "When you shall bring my body back here." When he had passed about two months in the enjoyment of his rest, and had as usual subdued both his body and mind with his accustomed severity, he was suddenly seized with illness, and began to prepare for the joy of everlasting happiness, through pain and temporal affliction. I will describe his death in the words of him who related it to me, namely, his attendant priest Herefrid, a most religious man, who also at that time presided over the monastery of Lindisfarne, in the capacity of abbot.

"He was brought to the point of death," said he, "after having been weakened by three weeks of continued suffering. For he was taken ill on the fourth day of the week; and again on the fourth day of the week his pains were over, and he departed to the Lord. But when I came to him on the first morning after his illness began — (for I had also arrived at the island with the brethren three days before) — in my desire to obtain his blessing and advice as usual, I gave the customary signal of my coming, and he came to the window, and replied to my salutation with a sigh. 'My lord bishop,' said I, 'what is the matter with you? Has your indisposition come upon you this last night?'— 'Yes,' said he, 'indisposition has come upon me.' I thought that he was speaking of an old complaint, which vexed him almost every day, and not of a new malady; so, without making any more inquiries, I said to him, 'Give us your blessing, for it is time to put to sea and return home.'— 'Do so,' replied he; 'go on board, and return home in safety. But, when the Lord shall have taken my spirit, bury me in this house, near my oratory, towards the south, over-against the eastern side of the holy cross, which I have erected there. Towards the north side of that same oratory is a sarcophagus under the turf, which the venerable Abbot Cudda formerly gave me. You will place my body therein, wrapping it in linen, which you will find in it. I would not wear it whilst I was alive, but for the love of that highly favoured woman, who sent it to me, the Abbess Verca, I have preserved it to wrap my corpse in.' On hearing these words, I replied, 'I beseech you, father, as you are weak, and talk of the probability of your dying, to let some of the brethren remain here to wait on you.'— 'Go home now,' said he; 'but return at the proper time.' So I was unable to prevail upon him, notwithstanding the urgency of my entreaties;

and at last I asked him when we should return to him. ‘When God so wills it,’ said he, ‘and when He Himself shall direct you.’ We did as he commanded us; and having assembled the brethren immediately in the church, I had prayers offered up for him without intermission; ‘for,’ said I, ‘it seems to me, from some words which he spoke, that the day is approaching on which he will depart to the Lord.’

“I was anxious about returning to him on account of his illness, but the weather prevented us for five days; and it was ordered so by God, as the event showed. For God Almighty, wishing to cleanse his servant from every stain of earthly weakness, and to show his adversaries how weak they were against the strength of his faith, kept him aloof from men, and put him to the proof by pains of the flesh, and still more violent encounters with the ancient enemy. At length there was a calm, and we went to the island, and found him away from his cell in the house where we were accustomed to reside. The brethren who came with me had some occasion to go back to the neighbouring shore, so that I was left alone on the island to minister to the holy father. I warmed some water and washed his feet, which had an ulcer from a long swelling, and, from the quantity of blood that came from it, required to be attended to. I also warmed some wine which I had brought, and begged him to taste it; for I saw by his face that he was worn out with pain and want of food. When I had finished my service, he sat down quietly on the couch, and I sat down by his side.

“Seeing that he kept silence, I said, ‘I see, my lord bishop, that you have suffered much from your complaint since we left you, and I marvel that you were so unwilling for us, when we departed, to send you some of our number to wait upon you.’ He replied, ‘It was done by the providence and the will of God, that I might be left without any society or aid of man, and suffer somewhat of affliction. For when you were gone, my languor began to increase, so that I left my cell and came hither to meet any one who might be on his way to see me, that he might not have the trouble of going further. Now, from the moment of my coming until the present time, during a space of five days and five nights, I have sat here without moving.’ — ‘And how have you supported life, my lord bishop?’ asked I; ‘have you remained so long without taking food?’ Upon which, turning up the couch on which he was sitting, he showed me five onions concealed therein, saying, ‘This has been my food for five days; for, whenever my mouth became dry and parched with thirst, I cooled and refreshed myself by tasting these;’ — now one of the onions appeared to have been a little gnawed, but certainly not more than half of it was eaten; — ‘and,’ continued he, ‘my enemies have never persecuted me so much during my whole stay in the island, as they have done during these last five days.’ I was not bold enough to ask what kinds of persecutions he had suffered: I only asked him to have some one to wait upon him. He consented, and kept some of us with him; amongst whom was the priest Bede the elder, who had always been used to familiar attendance upon him. This man was

consequently a most faithful witness of every thing which he gave or received, whom Cuthbert wished to keep with him, to remind him if he did not make proper compensation for any presents which he might receive, that before he died he might render to every one his own. He kept also another of the brethren with him, who had long suffered from a violent diarrhœa, and could not be cured by the physicians; but, for his religious merit, and prudent conduct, and grave demeanour, was thought worthy to hear the last words of the man of God, and to witness his departure to the Lord.

“Meanwhile I returned home, and told the brethren that the holy father wished to be buried in his own island; and I added my opinion, that it would be more proper and becoming to obtain his consent for his body to be transported from the island, and buried in the monastery with the usual honours. My words pleased them, and we went to the bishop, and asked him, saying, ‘We have not dared, my lord bishop, to despise your injunction to be buried here, and yet we have thought proper to request of you permission to transport your body over to the monastery, and so have you amongst us.’ To which he replied, ‘It was also my wish to repose here, where I have fought my humble battles for the Lord, where, too, I wish to finish my course, and whence I hope to be lifted up by a righteous Judge to obtain the crown of righteousness. But I think it better for you, also, that I should repose here, on account of the fugitives and criminals who may flee to my corpse for refuge; and when they have thus obtained an asylum, inasmuch as I have enjoyed the fame, humble though I am, of being a servant of Christ, you may think it necessary to intercede for such before the secular rulers, and so you may have trouble on my account.’ When, however, we urged him with many entreaties, and asserted that such labour would be agreeable and easy to us, the man of God at length, after some deliberation, spoke thus:— ‘Since you wish to overcome my scruples, and to carry my body amongst you, it seems to me to be the best plan to bury it in the inmost parts of the church, that you may be able to visit my tomb yourselves, and to control the visits of all other persons.’ We thanked him on our bended knees for this permission, and for his advice; and returning home, did not cease to pay him frequent visits.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

HOW, DURING HIS ILLNESS, HE CURED ONE OF HIS ATTENDANTS OF A DIARRHŒA.

“His malady now began to grow upon him, and we thought that the time of his dissolution was at hand. He bade his attendants carry him to his cell and oratory. It was the third hour of the day. We therefore carried him thither, for he was too feeble to walk himself. When we reached the door, we asked him to let one of us go in with him, to wait upon him; for no one had ever entered therein but himself. He cast his eyes round on all, and, fixing them on the sick brother above mentioned, said, ‘Walstod shall go in with me.’ Now Walstod was the man’s name. He went in accordingly, and stayed till the ninth hour: when he came out, and said to me, ‘The bishop wishes you to go in unto him; but I have a most wonderful thing to tell you: from the moment of my touching the bishop, when I supported him into the oratory, I have been entirely free from my old complaint.’ No doubt this was brought about by the effect of his heavenly piety, that, whereas in his time of health and strength he had healed many, he should now heal this man, when he was himself at the point of death, that so there might be a standing proof how strong the holy man was in spirit, though his body was at the lowest degree of weakness. In this cure he followed the example of the holy and reverend father and bishop, Aurelius Augustine, who, when weighed down by the illness of which he died, and lying on his couch, was entreated by a man to lay his hand on a sick person whom he had brought to him, that so he might be made well. To which Augustine replied, ‘If I had such power, I should first have practised it towards myself.’ The sick man answered, ‘I have been commanded to come to you: for some one said to me in a dream, Go to Bishop Augustine, and let him place his hand upon you, and you shall be well.’ On hearing this, Augustine placed his hand upon him, gave him his blessing, and sent him home perfectly recovered.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

OF HIS LAST INSTRUCTIONS TO THE BRETHREN; AND HOW, WHEN HE HAD RECEIVED THE VIATICUM, HE YIELDED UP HIS SOUL IN PRAYER.

“I went in to him about the ninth hour of the day, and found him lying in one corner of his oratory before the altar. I took my seat by his side, but he spoke very little, for the weight of his suffering prevented him from speaking much. But when I earnestly asked him what last discourse and valedictory salutation he would bequeath to the brethren, he began to make a few strong admonitions respecting peace and humility, and told me to beware of those persons who strove against these virtues, and would not practise them. ‘Have peace,’ said he, ‘and Divine charity ever amongst you: and when you are called upon to deliberate on your condition, see that you be unanimous in council. Let concord be mutual between you and other servants of Christ; and do not despise others who belong to the faith and come to you for hospitality, but admit them familiarly and kindly; and when you have entertained them, speed them on their journey: by no means esteeming yourselves better than the rest of those who partake of the same faith and mode of life. But have no communion with those who err from the unity of the Catholic faith, either by keeping Easter at an improper time, or by their perverse life. And know and remember, that, if of two evils you are compelled to choose one, I would rather that you should take up my bones, and leave these places, to reside wherever God may send you, than consent in any way to the wickedness of schismatics, and so place a yoke upon your necks. Study diligently, and carefully observe the Catholic rules of the Fathers, and practise with zeal those institutes of the monastic life which it has pleased God to deliver to you through my ministry. For I know, that, although during my life some have despised me, yet after my death you will see what sort of man I was, and that my doctrine was by no means worthy of contempt.’

“These words, and such as these, the man of God delivered to us at intervals, for, as we before said, the violence of his complaint had taken from him the power of speaking much at once. He then spent the rest of the day until the evening in the expectation of future happiness; to which he added this also, that he spent the night in watchfulness and prayer. When his hour of evening-service was come, he received from me the blessed sacrament, and thus strengthened himself for his departure, which he now knew to be at hand, by partaking of the body and blood of Christ; and when he had lifted up his eyes to heaven, and stretched out his hands above him, his soul, intent upon heavenly praises, sped his way to the joys of the heavenly kingdom.

CHAPTER XL.

HOW, ACCORDING TO THE PREVIOUS WARNING OF THE PSALM WHICH THEY SANG AT HIS DEATH, THE BRETHREN OF LINDISFARNE WERE ASSAILED FROM WITHOUT, BUT BY THE HELP OF GOD WERE PROTECTED.

“I immediately went out, and told the brethren, who had passed the whole night in watchfulness and prayer, and chanced at that moment in the order of evening-service to be singing the 59th Psalm, which begins, ‘O Lord, thou hast rejected us and destroyed us; thou hast been angry, and hast pitied us.’ One of them instantly lighted two candles, and, holding one in each hand, ascended a lofty spot, to show to the brethren who were in the monastery of Lindisfarne, that the holy man was dead; for they had agreed beforehand that such a signal should be made. The brother, who had waited an hour on an opposite height in the island of Lindisfarne, ran with speed to the monastery, where the brethren were assembled to perform the usual ceremonies of the evening-service, and happened to be singing the above-named Psalm when the messenger entered. This was a Divine dispensation, as the event showed. For, when the man of God was buried, the Church was assailed by such a blast of temptation, that several of the brethren left the place rather than be involved in such dangers.

“At the end of a year, Eadbert was ordained bishop. He was a man of great virtues, learned in the Holy Scripture, and in particular given to works of charity. If I may use the words of Scripture, The Lord built up Jerusalem, i. e. the vision of peace, and gathered together the dispersion of Israel. He healed those who were contrite in heart, and bound up their bruises, so that it was then given openly to understand the meaning of the hymn which was then for the first time sung, when the death of the sainted man was known; namely, that after his death his countrymen should be exposed to be repulsed and destroyed, but after a demonstration of his threatening anger should again be protected by the Divine mercy. He who considers the sequel also of the above-named Psalm will perceive that the event corresponded to its meaning. The body of the venerable father was placed on board a ship, and carried to the island of Lindisfarne. It was there met by a large crowd of persons singing psalms, and placed in the church of the holy Apostle Peter, in a stone coffin on the right-hand side of the altar.”

CHAPTER XLI.

HOW A BOY, WHO WAS POSSESSED BY A DEVIL, WAS CURED BY SOME DIRT, FROM THE PLACE WHERE THE WATER IN WHICH HIS CORPSE HAD BEEN WASHED HAD BEEN THROWN.

But even when the servant of Christ was dead and buried, the miracles which he worked whilst alive did not cease. For a certain boy, in the territory of Lindisfarne, was vexed so terribly by an evil spirit, that he altogether lost his reason, and shouted and cried aloud, and tried to tear in pieces with his teeth his own limbs, or whatever came in his way. A priest from the monastery was sent to the sufferer; but, though he had been accustomed to exorcise and expel evil spirits, yet in this case he could not prevail: he therefore advised the lad's father to put him into a cart and drive him to the monastery, and to pray to God in his behalf before the relics of the holy saints which are there. The father did as he was advised; but the holy saints, to show how high a place Cuthbert occupied amongst them, refused to bestow on him the benefit desired. The mad boy, therefore, by howling, groaning, and gnashing his teeth, filled the eyes and ears of all who were there with horror, and no one could think of any remedy; when, behold, one of the priests, being taught in spirit that by the aid of the holy father Cuthbert he might be cured, went privately to the place where he knew the water had been thrown, in which his dead body had been washed; and taking from thence a small portion of the dirt, he mixed it with some water, and carrying it to the sufferer, poured it into his open mouth, from which he was uttering the most horrible and lamentable cries. He instantly held his tongue, closed his mouth, and shutting his eyes also, which before were bloodshot and staring hideously, he fell back into a profound sleep. In this state he passed the night; and in the morning, rising up from his slumber, free from his madness, he found himself also, by the merits and intercession of the blessed Cuthbert, free from the evil spirit by which he had been afflicted. It was a marvellous sight, and delectable to all good men, to see the son sound in mind accompany his father to the holy places, and give thanks for the aid of the saints; although the day before, from the extremity of his madness, he did not know who or where he was. When, in the midst of the whole body of the brethren looking on and congratulating him, he had on his knees offered up before the relics of the martyrs praise to the Lord God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, he returned to his home, freed from the harassing of the foe, and confirmed in the faith which he before professed. They show to this day the pit into which that memorable water was thrown, of a square shape, surrounded with wood, and filled with little stones. It is near the church in which his body reposes, on the south side. From that time God permitted many other cures to be wrought by means of those same stones, and the dirt from the same place.

CHAPTER XLII.

HOW HIS BODY AFTER NINE YEARS WAS FOUND UNDECAYED.

Now Divine Providence, wishing to show to what glory this holy man was exalted after death, who even before death had been distinguished by so many signs and miracles, inspired the minds of the brethren with a wish to remove his bones, which they expected to find dry and free from his decayed flesh, and to put them in a small coffer, on the same spot, above the ground, as objects of veneration to the people. This wish they communicated to the holy Bishop Eadbert about the middle of Quadragesima; and he ordered them to execute this on the 20th of April, which was the anniversary of the day of his burial. They accordingly did so; and opening the tomb, found his body entire, as if he were still alive, and his joints were still flexible, as if he were not dead, but sleeping. His clothes, also, were still undecayed, and seemed to retain their original freshness and colour. When the brethren saw this, they were so astonished, that they could scarcely speak, or look on the miracle which lay before them, and they hardly knew what they were doing.

As a proof of the uncorrupted state of the clothes, they took a portion of them from one of the extremities, — for they did not dare to take any from the body itself, — and hastened to tell what they had found to the bishop, who was then walking alone at a spot remote from the monastery, and closed in by the flowing waves of the sea. Here it was his custom to pass the Quadragesima; and here he occupied himself forty days before the birthday of our Lord in the utmost devotion, accompanied with abstinence, prayer, and tears. Here, also, his venerable predecessor, Cuthbert, before he went to Farne, as we have related, spent a portion of his spiritual warfare in the service of the Lord. The brethren brought with them, also, the piece of cloth in which the body of the saint had been wrapped. The bishop thanked them for the gift, and heard their report with eagerness, and with great earnestness kissed the cloth as if it were still on the saint's body. "Fold up the body," said he, "in new cloth instead of this, and place it in the chest which you have prepared. But I know of a certainty that the place which has been consecrated by the virtue of this heavenly miracle will not long remain empty; and happy is he to whom the Lord, who is the giver of true happiness, shall grant to rest therein." To these words he added what I have elsewhere expressed in verse, and said, —

"What man the wondrous gifts of God shall tell?

What ear the joys of paradise shall hear?

Triumphant o'er the gates of death and hell,

The just shall live amid the starry sphere," &c.

When the bishop had said much more to this effect, with many tears and much contrition, the brethren did as he ordered them; and having folded up

the body in some new cloth, and placed it in a chest, laid it on the pavement of the sanctuary.

CHAPTER XLIII.

HOW THE BODY OF BISHOP EADBERT WAS LAID IN THE GRAVE OF THE MAN OF GOD, AND THE COFFIN OF THAT SAINT PLACED UPON IT.

Meanwhile, God's chosen servant, Bishop Eadbert, was seized by an illness, which daily grew more and more violent, so that not long after, that is, on the sixth of May, he also departed to the Lord. It was an especial mercy granted to his earnest prayers, that he left this life by a gradual, and not a sudden death. His body was placed in the grave of the blessed father Cuthbert, and upon it they placed the coffin in which the body of that saint lay. And to this day miracles are there wrought, if the faith of those who seek them admit of it. Even the clothes which had covered his blessed body, whether dead or alive, still possess a healing power.

CHAPTER XLIV.

HOW A SICK MAN WAS CURED AT HIS TOMB BY PRAYER.

Lastly, there came from foreign parts a certain priest of the reverend and holy Wilbrord Clement, bishop of the Fresons, who, whilst he was stopping at the monastery, fell into a severe illness, which lasted so long, that his life was despaired of. Overcome with pain, he seemed unable either to live or die, until, thinking on a happy plan, he said to his attendant, “Lead me, I beg of you, to-day after mass,” (for it was Sunday,) “to the body of the holy man of God, to pray: I hope his intercession may save me from these torments, so that I may either return whole to this life, or die, and go to that which is everlasting.” His attendant did as he had asked him, and with much trouble led him, leaning on a staff, into the church. He there bent his knees at the tomb of the holy father, and, with his head stooping towards the ground, prayed for his recovery; when, suddenly, he felt in all his limbs such an accession of strength from the incorruptible body of the saint, that he rose up from prayer without trouble, and returned to the guests’ chamber without the assistance of the conductor who had led him, or the staff on which he had leaned. A few days afterwards he proceeded in perfect health upon his intended journey.

CHAPTER XLV.

HOW A PARALYTIC WAS HEALED BY MEANS OF HIS SHOES.

There was a young man in a monastery not far off, who had lost the use of all his limbs by a weakness which the Greeks call paralysis. His abbot, knowing that there were skilful physicians in the monastery of Lindisfarne, sent him thither with a request that, if possible, he might be healed. The brethren, at the instance of their own abbot and bishop also, attended to him with the utmost care, and used all their skill in medicine, but without effect, for the malady increased daily, insomuch that, save his mouth, he could hardly move a single limb. Being thus given over by all worldly physicians, he had recourse to Him who is in heaven, who, when He is sought out in truth, is kind towards all our iniquities, and heals all our sicknesses. The poor man begged of his attendant to bring him something which had come from the incorruptible body of the holy man; for he believed that by means thereof he might, with the blessing of God, return to health. The attendant, having first consulted the abbot, brought the shoes which the man of God had worn in the tomb, and having stripped the poor man's feet naked, put them upon him; for it was in his feet that the palsy had first attacked him. This he did at the beginning of the night, when bedtime was drawing near. A deep sleep immediately came over him; and as the stillness of night advanced, the man felt a palpitation in his feet alternately, so that the attendants, who were awake and looking on, perceived that the virtue of the holy man's relics was beginning to exert its power, and that the desired restoration of health would ascend upwards from the feet. As soon as the monastery bell struck the hour of midnight prayer, the invalid himself was awakened by the sound and sat up. He found his nerves and the joints of his limbs suddenly endowed with inward strength: his pains were gone; and perceiving that he was cured, he arose, and in a standing posture spent the whole time of the midnight or matin song in thanksgiving to God. In the morning he went to the cathedral, and in the sight of all the congratulating brethren he went round all the sacred places, offering up prayers and the sacrifice of praise to his Saviour. Thus it came to pass, that, by a most wonderful vicissitude of things, he, who had been carried thither weak and borne upon a cart, returned home sound in his own strength, and with all his limbs strengthened and confirmed. Wherefore it is profitable to bear in mind that this change was the work of the right hand of the Most High, whose mighty miracles never cease from the beginning of the world to show themselves forth to mankind.

CHAPTER XLVI.

HOW THE HERMIT FELGELD WAS CURED OF A SWELLING IN THE FACE BY MEANS OF THE COVERING OF THE WALL OF THE MAN OF GOD'S HOUSE.

Nor do I think I ought to omit the heavenly miracle which the Divine mercy showed by means of the ruins of the holy oratory, in which the venerable father went through his solitary warfare in the service of the Lord. Whether it was effected by the merits of the same blessed father Cuthbert, or his successor Ethelwald, a man equally devoted to the Lord, the Searcher of the heart knows best. There is no reason why it may not be attributed to either of the two, in conjunction with the faith of the most holy father Felgeld; through whom and in whom the miraculous cure, which I mention, was effected. He was the third person who became tenant of the same place and its spiritual warfare, and, at present more than seventy years old, is awaiting the end of this life, in expectation of the heavenly one.

When, therefore, God's servant Cuthbert had been translated to the heavenly kingdom, and Ethelwald had commenced his occupation of the same island and monastery, after many years spent in conversation with the monks, he gradually aspired to the rank of anachoritish perfection. The walls of the aforesaid oratory, being composed of planks somewhat carelessly put together, had become loose and tottering by age, and, as the planks separated from one another, an opening was afforded to the weather. The venerable man, whose aim was rather the splendour of the heavenly than of an earthly mansion, having taken hay, or clay, or whatever he could get, had filled up the crevices, that he might not be disturbed from the earnestness of his prayers by the daily violence of the winds and storms. When Ethelwald entered and saw these contrivances, he begged the brethren who came thither to give him a calf's skin, and fastened it with nails in the corner, where himself and his predecessor used to kneel or stand when they prayed, as a protection against the storm.

Twelve years after, he also ascended to the joys of the heavenly kingdom, and Felgeld became the third inhabitant of the place. It then seemed good to the right reverend Eadfrid, bishop of the church of Lindisfarne, to restore from its foundation the time-worn oratory. This being done, many devout persons begged of Christ's holy servant Felgeld to give them a small portion of the relics of God's servant Cuthbert, or of Ethelwald his successor. He accordingly determined to cut up the above-named calf's skin into pieces, and give a portion to each. But he first experienced its influence in his own person: for his face was much deformed by a swelling and a red patch. The symptoms of this deformity had become manifest long before to the monks, whilst he was dwelling among them. But now that he was living alone, and bestowed

less care on his person, whilst he practised still greater rigidities, and, like a prisoner, rarely enjoyed the sun or air, the malady increased, and his face became one large red swelling. Fearing, therefore, lest he should be obliged to abandon the solitary life and return to the monastery; presuming in his faith, he trusted to heal himself by the aid of those holy men whose house he dwelt in, and whose holy life he sought to imitate. For he steeped a piece of the skin above mentioned in water, and washed his face therewith; whereupon the swelling was immediately healed, and the cicatrice disappeared. This I was told, in the first instance, by a religious priest of the monastery of Jarrow, who said that he well knew Felgeld's face to have been in the deformed and diseased state which I have described, and that he saw it and felt it with his hand through the window after it was cured. Felgeld afterwards told me the same thing, confirming the report of the priest, and asserting that his face was ever afterwards free from the blemish during the many years that he passed in that place. This he ascribed to the agency of the Almighty Grace, which both in this world heals many, and in the world to come will heal all the maladies of our minds and bodies, and, satisfying our desires after good things, crown us for ever with its mercy and compassion. Amen.

LIVES OF THE HOLY ABBOTS OF WEARMOUTH AND JARROW



Translated by J. A. Giles

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St Peter's Church, Monkswearmouth, Sunderland

Introduction

Here begins the book of the lives of the holy abbots Benedict, Ceolfrid, Eosterwine, Sigfrid and Hwaetberht.

Chapter 1

THE pious servant of Christ, Biscop, called Benedict, with the assistance of the Divine grace, built a monastery in honour of the most holy of the apostles, St. Peter, near the mouth of the river Were, on the north side. The venerable and devout king of that nation, Egfrid, contributed the land; and Biscop, for the space of sixteen years, amid innumerable perils in journeying and in illness, ruled this monastery with the same piety which stirred him up to build it. If I may use the words of the blessed Pope Gregory, in which he glorifies the life of the abbot of the same name, he was a man of a venerable life, blessed (Benedictus) both in grace and in name; having the mind of an adult even from his childhood, surpassing his age by his manners, and with a soul addicted to no false pleasures. He was descended from a noble lineage of the Angles, and by corresponding dignity of mind worthy to be exalted into the company of the angels. Lastly, he was the minister of King Oswy, and by his gift enjoyed an estate suitable to his rank; but at the age of twenty five years he despised a transitory wealth, that he might obtain that which is eternal. He made light of a temporal warfare with a donative that will decay, that he might serve under the true King, and earn an everlasting kingdom in the heavenly city. He left his home, his kinsmen and country, for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, that he might receive a hundredfold and enjoy everlasting life: he disdained to submit to carnal nuptials, that he might be able to follow the Lamb bright with the of chastity in the heavenly kingdoms: he refused the father of mortal children in the flesh, being foreordained of Christ to educate for Him in spiritual doctrine immortal children in heaven.

Chapter 2

Having therefore left his country, he came to Rome, and took care to visit and worship in the body the resting. places of the remains of the holy Apostles, towards whom he had always been inflamed with holy love. When he returned home, he did not cease to love and venerate, and to preach to all he could the precepts of ecclesiastical life which he had seen. At this time Alfrid, son of the above-named King Oswy, being about to visit Rome, to worship at the gates of the holy Apostles, took him as the companion of his journey. When the king, his father diverted him from this intention, and made him reside in his own country and kingdom; yet, like a youth of good promise, accomplishing the journey which he had under taken, Biscop returned with the greatest expedition to Rome, in the time of Pope Vitalian, of blessed memory; and there having extracted no little sweetness of whole some learning, as he had done previously, after some months he went to the island of Lerins, where he joined himself to the company of monks, received the tonsure, and, having taken the vow, observed the regular discipline with due solicitude; and when he had for two years been instructed in the suitable learning of the monastic life, he determined, in love for that first of the Apostles, St. Peter, to return to the city which was hallowed by his remains.

Chapter 3

Not long after, a merchant-vessel arrived, which enabled him to gratify his wish. At that time, Egbert, king of Kent, had sent out of Britain a man who had been elected to the office of bishop, Wighard by name, who had been adequately taught by the Roman disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory in Kent on every topic of Church discipline; but the king wished him to be ordained bishop at Rome, in order that, having him for bishop of his own nation and language, he might himself, as well as his people, be the more thoroughly master of the words and mysteries of the holy faith, as he would then have these administered, not through an interpreter, but from the hands and by the tongue of a kinsman and fellow countryman. But Wig hard, on coming to Rome, died of a disease, with all his attendants, before he had received the dignity of bishop. Now the Apostolic Father, that the embassy of the faithful might not fail through the death of their ambassadors, called a council, and appointed one of his Church to send as archbishop into Britain. This was Theodore, a man deep in all secular and ecclesiastical learning, whether Greek or Latin; and to him was given, as a colleague and counsellor, a man equally strenuous and prudent, the abbot Hadrian. Perceiving also that the reverend Benedict would become a man of wisdom, industry, piety, and nobility of mind, he committed to him the newly ordained bishop, with his followers, enjoining him to abandon the travel which he had undertaken for Christ's sake; and with a higher good in view, to return home to his country, and bring into it that teacher of wisdom whom it had so earnestly wished for, and to be to him an interpreter and guide, both on the journey thither, and afterwards, upon his arrival, when he should begin to preach. Benedict did as he was commanded; they came to Kent, and were joyfully received there; Theodore ascended his episcopal throne, and Benedict took upon himself to rule the monastery of the blessed Apostle Peter, of which, afterwards, Hadrian became abbot.

Chapter 4

He ruled the monastery for two years; and then successfully, as before, accomplished a third voyage from Britain to Rome, and brought back a large number of books on sacred literature, which he had either bought at a price or received as gifts from his friends. On his return he arrived at Vienne, where he took possession of such as he had entrusted his friends to purchase for him. When he had come home, he determined to go to the court of Conwalh, king of the West Saxons, whose friendship and services he had already more than once experienced. But Conwalh died suddenly about this time, and he therefore directed his course to his native province. He came to the court of Egfrid, king of Northumberland, and gave an account of all that he had done since in youth he had left his country. He made no secret of his zeal for religion, and showed what ecclesiastical or monastic instructions he had received at Rome and elsewhere. He displayed the holy volumes and relics of Christ's blessed Apostles and martyrs, which he had brought, and found such favour in the eyes of the king, that he forthwith gave him seventy hides of land out of his own estates, and ordered a monastery to be built thereon for the first pastor of his church. This was done, as I said before, at the mouth of the river Were, on the left bank, in the 674th year of our Lord's incarnation, in the second indiction, and in the fourth year of King Egfrid's reign.

Chapter 5

After the interval of a year, Benedict crossed the sea into Gaul, and no sooner asked than he obtained and carried back with him some masons to build him a church in the Roman style, which he had always admired. So much zeal did he show from his love to Saint Peter, in whose honour he was building it, that within a year from the time of laying the foundation, you might have seen the roof on and the solemnity of the mass celebrated therein. When the work was drawing to completion, he sent messengers to Gaul to fetch makers of glass, (more properly artificers,) who were at this time unknown in Britain, that they might glaze the windows of his church, with the cloisters and dining-rooms. This was done, and they came, and not only finished the work required, but taught the English nation their handicraft, which was well adapted for enclosing the lanterns of the church, and for the vessels required for various uses. All other things necessary for the service of the church and the altar, the sacred vessels, and the vestments, because they could not be procured in England, he took especial care to buy and bring home from foreign parts.

Chapter 6

Some decorations and muniments there were which could not be procured even in Gaul, and these the pious founder determined to fetch from Rome; for which purpose, after he had formed the rule for his monastery, he made his fourth voyage to Rome, and returned loaded with more abundant spiritual merchandise than before. In the first place, he brought back a large quantity of books of all kinds; secondly, a great number of relics of Christ's Apostles and martyrs, all likely to bring a blessing on many an English church; thirdly, he introduced the Roman mode of chanting, singing, and ministering in the church, by obtaining permission from Pope Agatho to take back with him John, the archchanter of the church of St. Peter, and abbot of the monastery of St. Martin to teach the English. This John, when he arrived in England, not only communicated instruction by teaching personally, but left behind him numerous writings, which are still preserved in the library of the same monastery. In the fourth place, Benedict brought with him a thing by no means to be despised, namely, a letter of privilege from Pope Agatho, which he had procured, not only with the consent, but by the request and exhortation, of King Egfrid, and by which the monastery was rendered safe and secure for ever from foreign invasion. Fifthly, he brought with him pictures of sacred representations, to adorn the church of St. Peter, which he had built; namely, a likeness of the Virgin Mary and of the twelve Apostles, with which he intended to adorn the central nave, on boards placed from one wall to the other; also some figures from ecclesiastical history for the south wall, and others from the Revelation of St. John for the north wall; so that every one who entered the church, even if they could not read, wherever they turned their eyes, might have before them the amiable countenance of Christ and his saints, though it were but in a picture, and with watchful minds might revolve on the benefits of our Lord's incarnation, and having before their eyes the perils of the last judgment, might examine their hearts the more strictly on that account.

Chapter 7

Thus King Egfrid, delighted by the virtues and zealous piety of the venerable Benedict, augmented the territory which he had given, on which to build this monastery, by a further grant of land of forty hides; on which, at the end of a year, Benedict, by the same King Egfrid's concurrence, and, indeed, command, built the monastery of the Apostle St. Paul, with this condition, that the same concord and unity should exist for ever between the two; so that, for instance, as the body cannot be separated from the head, nor the head forget the body by which it lives, in the same manner no man should ever try to divide these two monasteries, which had been united under the names of the first of the Apostles. Ceolfrid, whom Benedict made abbot, had been his most zealous assistant from the first foundation of the former monastery, and had gone with him at the proper time to Rome, for the sake of acquiring instruction, and offering up his prayers. At which time also he chose priest Easterwine to be the abbot of St. Peter's monastery, that with the help of this fellow soldier he might sustain a burden otherwise too heavy for him. And let no one think it unbecoming that one monastery should have two abbots at once. His frequent travelling for the benefit of the monastery, and absence in foreign parts, was the cause; and history informs us, that, on a pressing occasion, the blessed St. Peter also ordained two pontiffs under him to rule the Church at Rome; and Abbot Benedict the Great, himself, as Pope St. Gregory writes of him, appointed twelve abbots over his followers, as he judged expedient, without any harm done to Christian charity; nay, rather to the increase thereof.

Chapter 8

This man therefore undertook the government of the monastery in the ninth year after its foundation, and continued it till his death four years after. He was a man of noble birth; but he did not make that, like some men, a cause of boasting and despising others, but a motive for exercising nobility of mind also, as becomes a servant of the Lord. He was the cousin of his own abbot Benedict; and yet such was the singleness of mind in both, such their contempt for human grandeur, that the one, on entering the monastery, did not expect any notice of honour or relationship to be taken of him more than of others, and Benedict himself never thought of offering any; but the young man, faring like the rest, took pleasure in undergoing the usual course of monastic discipline in every respect. And indeed, though he had been an attendant on King Egfrid, and had abandoned his temporal vocation and arms, devoting himself to spiritual warfare, he remained so humble and like the other brethren, that he took pleasure in threshing and winnowing, milking the ewes and cows, and employed himself in the bakehouse, the garden, the kitchen, and in all the other labours of the monastery with readiness and submission. When he attained to the name and dignity of abbot, he retained the same spirit; saying to all, according to the advice of a certain wise man, "They have made thee a ruler; be not exalted, but be amongst them like one of them, gentle, affable, and kind to all." Whenever occasion required, he punished offenders by regular discipline; but was rather careful, out of his natural habits of love, to warn them not to offend and bring a cloud of disquietude over his cheerful countenance. Oftentimes, when he went forth on the business of the monastery, if he found the brethren working, he would join them and work with them, by taking the plough-handle, or handling the smith's hammer, or using the winnowing machine, or any thing of like nature. For he was a young man of great strength, and pleasant tone of voice, of a kind and bountiful disposition, and fair to look on. He ate of the same food as the other brethren, and in the same apartment: he slept in the same common room as he did before he was abbot; so that even after he was taken ill, and foresaw clear signs of his approaching death, he still remained two days in the common dormitory of the brethren. He passed the five days immediately before his death in a private apartment, from which he came out one day, and sitting in the open air, sent for all the brethren, and, as his kind feelings prompted him, gave to each of them the kiss of peace, whilst they all shed tears of sorrow for the loss of this their father and their guide. He died on the seventh of March, in the night, as the brethren were leaving off the matin hymn. He was twenty-four years old when he entered the monastery; he lived there twelve years, during seven of which he was in priest's orders, the others he passed in the dignity of abbot; and so, having thrown off his fleshly and perishable body, he entered the heavenly kingdom.

Chapter 9

Now that we have had this foretaste of the life of the venerable Easterwine, let us resume the thread of the narrative. When Benedict had made this man abbot of St Peter's, and Ceolfrid abbot of St. Paul's, he not long after made his fifth voyage from Britain to Rome, and returned (as usual) with an immense number of proper ecclesiastical relics. There were many sacred books pictures of the saints, as numerous as before. He also brought with him pictures out of our Lord's history, which he hung round the chapel of Our Lady in the larger monastery; and others to adorn St. Paul's church and monastery, ably describing the connexion of the Old and New Testament; as, for instance, Isaac bearing the wood for his own sacrifice, and Christ carrying the cross on which he was about to suffer, were placed side by side. Again, the serpent raised up by Moses in the desert was illustrated by the Son of Man exalted on the cross. Among other things, he brought two cloaks, all of silk, and of incomparable workmanship, for which he received an estate of three hides on the south bank of the river Were, near, its mouth, from King Alfrid, for he found on his return that Egfrid had been murdered during his absence.

Chapter 10

But, amid this prosperity, he found afflictions also awaiting his return. The venerable Easterwine, whom he had made abbot when he departed, and many of the brethren committed to his care, had died of a general pestilence. But for this loss he found some consolation in the good and reverend deacon, Sigfrid, whom the brethren and his co-abbot Ceolfred had chosen to be his successor. He was a man well skilled in the knowledge of Holy Scripture of most excellent manners, of wonderful continence, and one in whom the virtues of the mind were in no small degree depressed by bodily infirmity, and the innocency of whose heart was tempered with a baneful and incurable affection of the lungs.

Chapter 11

Not long after, Benedict himself was seized by a disease. For, that the virtue of patience might be a trial of their religious zeal, the Divine Love laid both of them on the bed of temporal sickness, that when they had conquered their sorrows by death, He might cherish them for ever in heavenly peace and quietude. For Sigfrid also, as I have mentioned, died wasted by a long illness: and Benedict died of a palsy, which grew upon him for three whole years; so that when he was dead in all his lower extremities, his upper and vital members, spared to show his patience and virtue, were employed in the midst of his sufferings in giving thanks to the Author of his being, in praises to God, and exhortations to the brethren. He urged the brethren, when they came to see him, to observe the rule which he had given them. “For,” said he, “you cannot suppose that it was my own untaught heart which dictated this rule to you. I learnt it from seventeen monasteries, which I saw during my travels, and most approved of, and I copied these institutions thence for your benefit. “The large and noble library, which he had brought from Rome, and which was necessary for the edification of his church, he commanded to be kept entire, and neither by neglect to be injured or dispersed. But on one point he was most solicitous, in choosing an abbot, lest high birth, and not rather probity of life and doctrines should be attended to. “And I tell you of a truth,” said he, “in the choice of two evils, it would be much more tolerable for me, if God so pleased, that this place, wherein I have built the monastery, should for ever become a desert, than that my carnal brother, who, as we know, walks not in the way of truth, should become abbot, and succeed me in its government. Wherefore, my brethren, beware, and never choose an abbot on account of his birth, nor from any foreign place; but seek out, according to the rule of Abbot Benedict the Great, and the decrees of our order, with common consent, from amongst your own company, whoever in virtue of life and wisdom of doctrine may be found fittest for this office; and whomsoever you shall, by this unanimous inquiry of Christian charity, prefer and choose, let him be made abbot with the customary blessings, in presence of the bishop. For those who after the flesh beget children of the flesh, must necessarily seek fleshly and earthly heirs to their fleshly and earthly inheritance; but those who by the spiritual seed of the Word procreate spiritual sons to God, must of like necessity be spiritual in every thing which they do. Among their spiritual children, they think him the greatest who is possessed of the most abundant grace of the Spirit, in the same way as earthly parents consider their eldest as the principal one of their children, and prefer him to the others in dividing out their inheritance.”

Chapter 12

Nor must I omit to mention that the venerable Abbot Benedict, to lessen the wearisomeness of the night, which from his illness he often passed without sleeping, would frequently call a reader, and cause him to read aloud, as an example for himself, the history of the patience of Job, or some other extract from Scripture, by which his pains might be alleviated, and his depressed soul be raised to heavenly things. And because he could not get up to pray, nor without difficulty lift up his voice to the usual extent of daily psalmody, the prudent man, in his zeal for religion, at every hour of daily or nightly prayer would call to him some of the brethren, and making them sing psalms in two companies, would himself sing with them, and thus make up by their voices for the deficiency of his own.

Chapter 13

Now both the abbots saw that they were near death, and unfit longer to rule the monastery, from increasing weakness which, though tending no doubt to the perfection of Christian purity, was so great, that, when they expressed a desire to see one another before they died, and Sigfrid was brought in a litter into the room where Benedict was lying on his bed, though they were placed by the attendants with their heads on the same pillow, they had not the power of their own strength to kiss one another, but were assisted even in this act of fraternal love. After taking counsel with Sigfrid and the other brethren, Benedict sent for Ceolfrid, abbot of St. Paul's, dear to him not by relationship of the flesh, but by the ties of Christian virtue, and with the consent and approbation of all, made him abbot of both monasteries; thinking it expedient in every respect to preserve peace, unity, and concord between the two, if they should have one father and ruler for ever, after the example of the kingdom of Israel, which always remained invincible and inviolate by foreign nations as long as it was ruled by one and the same governor of its own race; but when for its former sins it was torn into opposing factions, it fell by degrees, and, thus shorn of its ancient integrity, perished. He reminded them also of that evangelical maxim, ever worthy to be remembered,—"A kingdom divided against itself shall be laid waste." ,

Chapter 14

Two months after this, God's chosen servant, the venerable Abbot Sigfrid, having passed through the fire and water of temporal tribulation, was carried to the resting - place of everlasting repose: he entered the mansion of the heavenly kingdom, rendering up whole offerings of praise to the Lord which his righteous lips had vowed; and after another space of four months, Benedict, who so nobly vanquished sin and wrought the deeds of virtue, yielded to the weakness of the flesh, and came to his end. Night came on chilled by the winter's blasts, but a day of eternal felicity succeeded, of serenity and of splendour. The brethren met together at the church, and passed the night without sleep in praying and singing, consoling their sorrow for their father's departure by one continued out-pouring of praise. Others clung to the chamber in which the sick man, strong in mind, awaited his departure from death and his entry into eternal life. A portion of Scripture from the Gospels, appointed to be read every evening, was recited by a priest during the whole night, to relieve their sorrow. The sacrament of our Lord's flesh and blood was given him as a viaticum at the moment of his departure; and thus his holy spirit, chastened and tried by the lengthened gallings of the lash, operating for his own good, abandoned the earthly tenement of the flesh, and escaped in freedom to the glory of everlasting happiness. That his departure was most triumphant, and neither impeded nor delayed by unclean spirits, the psalm which was chanted for him is a proof. For the brethren coming together to the church at the beginning of the night, sang through the Psalter in order, until they came to the 82nd, which begins, "God, who shall be like unto thee?" "The subject of the text is this; that the enemies of the Christian name, whether carnal or spiritual, are always endeavouring to destroy and disperse the church of Christ, and every individual soul among the faithful; but that, on the other hand, they themselves shall be confounded and routed, and shall perish for ever, unnerved before the power of the Lord, to whom there is no one equal, for He alone is Most Highest over the whole earth. Wherefore it was a manifest token of Divine interposition, that such a song should be sung at the moment of his death, against whom, with God's aid, no enemy could prevail. In the sixteenth year after he built the monastery, the holy confessor found rest in the Lord, on the 14th day of January, in the church of St. Peter; and thus, as he had loved that holy Apostle in his life, and obtained from him admission into the heavenly kingdom, so also after death he rested hard by his relics, and his altar, even in the body. He ruled the monastery, as I have stated, sixteen years: the first eight alone, without any assistant abbot; the last eight in conjunction with Easterwine, Sigfrid, and Ceolfrid, who enjoyed with him the title of abbot, and assisted him in his duties. The first of these was his colleague four years; the second, three; the third, one.

Chapter 15

The third of these, Ceolfrid, was a man of great perseverance of acute intellect, bold in action, experienced in judgment, and zealous in religion. He first of all, as we have mentioned, with the advice and assistance of Benedict, founded, completed, and ruled the monastery of St. Paul's seven years; and, afterwards, ably governed, during twenty-eight years, both these monasteries; or, to speak more correctly, the single monastery of St. Peter and St. Paul, in its two separate localities; and, whatever works of merit his predecessor had begun, he, with no less zeal took pains to finish. For, among other arrangements which he found it necessary to make, during his long government of the monastery, he built several oratories increased the number of vessels of the church and altar and the vestments of every kind; and the library of both monasteries, which Abbot Benedict had so actively begun under his equally zealous care became doubled in extent For he added three Pandects of a new translation to that of the old translation which he had brought from Rome; one of them, returning to Rome in his old age, he took with him as a gift; the other two he left to the two monasteries. Moreover, for a beautiful volume of the Geographers which Benedict had bought at Rome, he received from King Alfrid, who was well skilled in Holy Scripture, in exchange, a grant of land of eight hides, near the river Fresca, for the monastery of St. Paul's. Benedict had arranged this purchase with the same King Alfrid, before his death, but died before he could complete it. Instead of this land, Ceolfrid, in the reign of Osred, paid an additional price, and received a territory of twenty hides, in the village called by the natives Sambuce, and situated much nearer to the monastery. In the time of Pope Sergius, of blessed memory, some monks were sent to Rome, who procured from him a privilege for the protection of their monastery, similar to that which Pope Agatho had given to Benedict. This was brought back to Britain, and, being exhibited before a synod, was confirmed by the signatures of the bishops who were present, and their munificent King Alfrid, just as the former privilege was confirmed publicly by the king and bishops of the time. Zealous for the welfare of St. Peter's monastery, at that time under the government of the reverend and religious servant of Christ, Witmer, whose acquaintance with every kind of learning, both sacred and profane, was equally extensive, he made a gift of it for ever of a portion of land of ten hides, which he had received from King Alfrid, in the village called Daldun.

Chapter 16

But Ceolfrið having now practised a long course of regular discipline, which the prudent father Benedict had laid down for himself and his brethren on the authority of the elders; and having shown the most incomparable skill both in praying and chanting, in which he daily exercised himself, together with the most wonderful energy in punishing the wicked, and modesty in consoling the weak; having also observed such abstinence in meat and drink, and such humility in dress, as are uncommon among rulers; saw himself now old and full of days, and unfit any longer, from his extreme age, to prescribe to his brethren the proper forms of spiritual exercise by his life and doctrine. Having, therefore, deliberated long within himself, he judged it expedient, having first impressed on the brethren the observance of the rules which St. Benedict had given them, and thereby to choose for themselves a more efficient abbot out of their own number, to depart, himself, to Rome, where he had been in his ‘ youth with the holy Benedict; that not only he might for a time be free from all worldly cares before his death, and so have leisure and quiet for reflection, but that they also, having chosen a younger abbot, might naturally, in consequence thereof, observe more accurately the rules of monastic discipline.

Chapter 17

At first all opposed, and entreated him on their knees and with many tears, but their solicitations were to no purpose. Such was his eagerness to depart, that on the third day after he had disclosed his design to the brethren, he set out upon his journey. For he feared, what actually came to pass, that he might die before he reached Rome; and he was also anxious that neither his friends nor the nobility, who all honoured him, should delay his departure, or give him money which he would not have time to repay; for with him it was an invariable rule, if any one made him a present, to show equal grace by returning it, either at once or within a suitable space of time. Early in the morning, therefore, of Wednesday, the 4th of May, the mass was sung in the church of the Mother of God, the immaculate Virgin Mary, and in the church of the Apostle ; Peter; and those who were present communicating with him, he prepared for his departure. All of them assembled in St. Peter's church; and when he had lighted the frankincense, and addressed a prayer at the altar, he gave his blessing to all, standing on the steps and holding the censer in his hand. Amid the prayers of the Litany, the cry of sorrow resounded from all as they went out of the church: they entered the oratory of St. Laurence the martyr, which was in the dormitory of the brethren over against them. Whilst giving them his last farewell, he admonished them to preserve love towards one another and to correct, according to the Gospel rule, those who did amiss: he forgave all of them whatever wrong they might have done him; and entreated them all to pray for him, and to be reconciled to him, if he had ever reprimanded them too harshly. They went down to the shore and there, amid tears and lamentations, he gave them the kiss of peace, as they knelt upon their knees; and when he had offered up a prayer he went on board the vessel with his companions. The deacons of the Church went on board with him, carrying lighted tapers and a golden crucifix. Having crossed the river, he kissed the cross, mounted his horse, and departed, leaving in both his monasteries about six hundred brethren.

Chapter 18

When he was gone, the brethren returned to the church and with much weeping and prayer commended themselves and theirs to the protection of the Lord. After a short interval, having ended the nine o'clock psalm, they again assembled, and deliberated what was to be done. At length they resolved, with prayer, hymns, and fasting, to seek of the Lord a new abbot as soon as possible. This resolution they communicated to their brethren of St. Paul's, by some of that monastery who were present, and also by some of their own people. They immediately gave their consent, and both monasteries showing the same spirit, they all together lifted up their hearts and voices to the Lord. At length, on the third day, which was Easter Sunday, an assembly was held, consisting of all the brethren of St. Peter's and several of the elder monks from the monastery of St. Paul's. The greatest concord prevailed, and the same sentiments were expressed by both. They elected for their new abbot, Huetbert, who from his boyhood had not only been bred up in the regular discipline of the monastery, but had acquired much experience in the various duties of writing, chanting, reading, and teaching. He had been at Rome in the time of pope Sergius, of blessed memory, and had there learnt and copied every thing which he thought useful or worthy to be brought away. He had also been twelve years in priest's orders. He was now made abbot; and immediately went with some of the brethren to Ceolfrid, who was waiting for a ship in which to cross the ocean. They told him what they had done, for which he gave thanks to God, in approbation of their choice, and received from his successor a letter of recommendation to Pope Gregory, of which I have preserved the few passages which follow.

Chapter 19

“To our most beloved lord in the Lord of lords, and thrice blessed Pope Gregory, Huetbert, his most humble servant, abbot of the monastery of the holiest of the Apostles, St. Peter, in Saxony, Health for ever in the Lord ! I do not cease to give thanks to the dispensation of Divine wisdom, as do also all the holy brethren, who in these parts are seeking with me to bear the pleasant yoke of Christ, that they may find rest to their souls, that God has condescended to appoint so glorious a vessel of election to rule the Church in these our times; and by means of the light of truth and faith with which you are full, to scatter the beams of his love on all your inferiors a also We recommend to your holy clemency, most be loved father and lord in Christ, the grey hairs of our venerable and beloved father Abbot Ceolfred, the supporter and defender of our spiritual liberty and peace in this monastic retirement; and, in the first place, we give ; < thanks to the holy and undivided Trinity, for that, although he hath caused us much sorrow, lamentation, and tears, by his departure, he hath nevertheless arrived at the enjoyment of that rest which he long desired; whilst he was in his old age devoutly returning to that threshold of the holy Apostles, which he exultingly boasted, that when a youth he had visited, seen, and worshipped. After more s than forty years of care and toil, during his government of the monasteries, by his wonderful love of virtue, as if recently incited to conversation with the heavenly life, though worn out with extreme old age, and already almost at the gates of death, he a second time undertakes to travel in the cause of Christ, that the thorns of his former secular anxieties may be consumed by the fire of zeal blazing forth from that spiritual furnace. We next entreat your fatherly love, that, though we have not merited to do this, you will carefully fulfil towards him the last offices; knowing for certain, that though you may possess his body, yet both we and you shall have in his devout spirit, whether in the body or out of the body, a mighty intercessor and protector over our own last moments, at the throne of grace.” And so on through the rest of the letter.

Chapter 20

When Huetbert had returned to the monastery, Bishop Acca was sent for to confirm the election with his blessing. Afterwards, by his youthful zeal and wisdom, he gained many privileges for the monastery; and, amongst others, one which gave great delight to all, he took up the bones of Abbot Easterwine, which lay in the entrance porch of St. Peter's, and also the bones of his old preceptor, Abbot Sigfrid, which had been buried outside the Sacrarium towards the south, and placing both together in one chest, but separated by a partition, laid them within the church near the body of St. Benedict. He did this on Sigfrid's birthday, the 23rd of August; and on the same day Divine Providence so ordered that Christ's venerable servant Witmer, whom we have already mentioned, departed this life, and was buried in the same place as the aforesaid abbots, whose life he had imitated.

Chapter 21

But Christ's servant Ceolfrid, as has been said, died on his way to the threshold of the holy Apostles, of old age and weakness. For he reached the Lingones about nine o'clock, where he died seven hours after, and was honourably buried the next day in the church of the three twin martyrs, much to the sorrow, not only of the English who were in his train, to the number of eighty, but also of the neighbouring inhabitants, who were dissolved in tears at the loss of the reverend father. For it was almost impossible to avoid weeping to see part of his company continuing their journey without the holy father, whilst others, abandoning their first intentions, returned home to relate his death and burial; and others, again, lingered in sorrow at the tomb of the deceased among strangers speaking an unknown tongue.

Chapter 22

Ceolfrid was seventy-four years old when he died: forty seven years he had been in priest's orders, during thirty five of which he had been abbot; or, to speak more correctly, forty-three, -for, from the time when Benedict began to build his monastery in honour of the holiest of the Apostles, Ceolfrid had been his only companion, coadjutor, and teacher of the monastic rules. He never relaxed the rigour of ancient discipline from any occasions of old age, illness, or travel; for, from the day of his departure till the day of his death, i.e. from the 4th of June till the 25th of September, a space of one hundred and fourteen days, besides the canonical hours of prayer, he never omitted to go twice daily through the Psalter in order; and even when he became so weak that he could not ride on horseback, and was obliged to be carried in a horse litter, the holy ceremony of the mass was offered up every day, except one which he passed at sea, and the three days immediately before his death.

Chapter 23

He died on Friday, the 25th of September, in the year of our Lord 715, between three and four o'clock, in the fields of the city before mentioned, and was buried the next day near the first milestone on the south side of the city, in the monastery of the Twins, followed by a large number of his English attendants, and the inhabitants of the city and monastery. The names of these twin martyrs are Speusippus, Eleusippus, and Meleusippus. They were born at one birth, and born again by baptism at the same time: together with their aunt Leonella, they left behind them the holy remembrance of their martyrdom; and I pray that they may bestow upon my unworthy self, and upon our holy father, the benefit of their intercession and protection.

THE BOOK OF THE HOLY PLACES



Translated by J. A. Giles

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THE BOOK OF THE HOLY PLACES.

ABRIDGED FROM THE WORKS OF THE ANCIENTS.

CHAPTER I.

OF JERUSALEM.

THE city of Jerusalem is almost circular in its form, and the compass of its walls is by no means inconsiderable, and formerly included Mount Sion, which is close by, towards the south, and looks like the citadel of the town. The greater part of the city is lower than the mountain, and lies on the plain summit of one of the lower hills in the neighbourhood. After our Lord's passion it was destroyed by the Emperor Titus; but was restored and enlarged by Ælius Hadrianus Cæsar, from whom it received the name of Ælia. This is the reason why the place where our Lord suffered and was buried is now within the walls, whereas it was at that time without. In the circumference of its walls, which is extensive, there are eighty-four towers and six gates. The first is David's gate, to the west of Mount Sion: the second is the gate of the Fuller's Valley: the third is St. Stephen's gate: the fourth, Benjamin's: the fifth is the Postern or little gate, through which we go down by steps to the Valley of Jehoshaphat: the sixth gate is called Thecuitis. The most celebrated of these are the three gates of egress; the first towards the west, the second towards the north, and the third towards the east. On the north-west, the brow of Mount Sion appears above the city; and this part of the walls, with the interposing towers, is proved to have had no gates; namely, from David's gate above-mentioned, to that front of Mount Sion which looks with a rugged precipice towards the east. For the position of the city itself is this: it begins from the northern brow of Mount Sion, and falls with a gentle slope towards the walls on the north-east, where it is lower, so that the rain which falls runs in streams through the eastern gates, and carries with it all the filth of the streets into the brook Cedron, in the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

CHAPTER II.

OF THE SEPULCHRE OF OUR LORD, OF THE CHURCHES OF CONSTANTINE AND GOLGOTHA, AND OF THE OTHER HOLY PLACES IN JERUSALEM.

WHEN you have entered the city on the northern side, first of the Holy Places, as regards the order of the streets, you must turn out of the way to see the Church of Constantine, which is called: The Martyrdom. It was built in the most magnificent and princely style by the Emperor Constantine, to commemorate the finding of our Lord's cross in this place by his mother Helena. To the west of this is seen the Church of Golgotha, where too may be seen the rock which formerly bore the very cross that was fastened to our Lord's body; but which now bears a very large silver cross, and a great wheel of brass hangs from above with lamps. Under the place of our Lord's cross, a vault is hewn out of the rock, in which sacrifice is offered on an altar for honourable persons deceased, their bodies remaining meanwhile in the street. To the westward of this is the Anastasis, that is, the round church of our Saviour's resurrection, encompassed with three walls, and supported by twelve columns. Between each of the walls is a broad space, containing three altars at three different points of the middle wall, on the north, the south, and the west. It has eight doors or entrances through the three opposite walls; four whereof front to the north-east, and four to the south-east. In the midst of it is the round tomb of our Lord cut out of the rock, the top of which a man standing within can touch; the entrance is on the east; against it is laid that great stone, which to this day bears the marks of the iron tools within, but on the outside it is all covered with marble to the very top of the roof, which is adorned with gold, and bears a large golden cross. In the north part of the monument is the tomb of our Lord, hewn out of the same rock, seven feet in length, and three palms above the floor; the entrance being on the south side, where twelve lamps burn day and night, four within the sepulchre, and eight above on the right-hand side. The stone that was laid at the entrance to the monument, is now cleft in two; the lesser part of it stands as a square altar before the door of the monument; the greater part makes another square altar in the east part of the same church, and appears under the linen cloths. The colour of the said monument and sepulchre appears to be white and red. Attached to this church on the right sides is the square church of the blessed Mother of our Lord. In the street which unites the Martyrdom and the Golgotha is a seat, in which is the cup of our Lord concealed in a casket. It is touched and kissed through a hole in the covering. It is made of silver, has two handles, one on each side, and holds a French quart. In it also is the sponge which was used to minister drink to our Lord. But where Abraham built an altar whereon to sacrifice his son, there is a large wooden table on

which the people lay alms for the poor. All these particulars, which I have here mentioned, I have endeavoured to render more intelligible by the following picture

(The drawing is wanting in the Manuscripts.)

The soldier's lance also is kept inserted in a wooden cross, in the portico of the Martyrdom, and its shaft, which has been broken in two pieces, is an object of veneration to the whole city.

CHAPTER III.

OF MOUNT SION AND THE CHURCH BUILT THEREON, OF BETHSAIDA AND SILOAM.

NOW all these Holy Places, which we have mentioned, are situated beyond Mount Sion, to which the elevated ground extends as it falls away towards the north. But in the lower part of the city, where there was a temple built in the neighbourhood of the wall, on the eastern side, and joined to the city itself by a bridge which formed a thoroughfare between, the Saracens have now erected there a square building, with upright planks and large beams placed, in the roughest manner, over some ruins of the walls, and they frequent the place for prayer. There is room for three thousand persons. There are a few cisterns there to supply water. In the neighbourhood of the temple is the pool of Bethesda, marked by its two basins, one of which is generally filled by the rains of winter, the other is discoloured with red water. On that front of Mount Sion, which has a rugged precipice facing the east, the fountain of Siloa bursts forth between the walls at the bottom of the hill. According as it receives an increase of water from time to time, it flows towards the south; therefore, its waters are not sweet, but the day and hour of its springing up are uncertain, and it rushes with much noise amid the hollows in the ground and the hard rocks. Fountain of

Siloa. On the level summit of mount Sion are numerous cells of monks surrounding a large church, built there, as they say, by the Apostles, because they received the Holy Spirit in that place, and Saint Maria died there. The place of our Lord's holy supper is shown within; and a marble pillar stands in the middle of the church, to which our Lord was tied when he was scourged. The figure of the church is said to have been something like this: —

(The drawing is wanting in the Manuscripts.)

Here is also shown, on the outside of the city, the rock on which the first martyr, Stephen, was stoned: but in the middle of Jerusalem, where the dead man came to life when our Lord's cross was placed above him, stands a lofty pillar, which at the summer solstice does not throw a shadow, wherefore it is thought that the centre of the earth is in this place; and it has been said in history, "God, ages ago, hath wrought our salvation in the middle of the earth." According to which opinion Victorinus, Bishop of the church of Pictavia, writing of Golgotha, hath these words: —

"Est locus, ex omni medium quem credimus orbe,
Golgotha Judæi patrio cognomine dicunt."

"In the Earth's centre, 'tis believed the place
By Jews called Golgotha, we seek to trace."

CHAPTER IV.

OF ACHELDEMACH, AND THE PLACE WHERE JUDAS HANGED HIMSELF.

AFTER passing out through David's gate, we come to a fountain which runs through the valley towards the south. Half-way down the stream on the western side, Judas is said to have hanged himself. For there is there a large and very ancient fig-tree, according as Juvencus writes: —

“Informen rapuit ficus de vertice mortem.”

“And met grim death from off the Fig-tree's bough.”

Moreover, Acheldemach, on the south side of Mount Sion, is still famed for the bodies of foreigners and ignoble people that are brought there, some to be buried in the ground, others to rot upon its surface.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE NAPKIN FROM OUR LORD'S HEAD, AND OF ANOTHER AND LARGER TOWEL MADE BY THE VIRGIN MARY.

THE napkin from our Lord's head was stolen after his resurrection by a most good and Christian Jew, who kept it till his death, and left no end of riches. On his death-bed he asked his sons which of them would have the napkin, and which his other treasures. The elder chose the worldly money: the younger took the napkin. In process of time the wealth of the former diminished until he was reduced to poverty; but the riches of the younger increased with his faith, and the napkin continued for five generations in the possession of the faithful. After this, it fell into unholy hands, and increased their wealth as much as it had done in the case of the Jews, and for a very long time; until after long quarrels, the Christian Jews saying they were the heirs of Christ, and the unbelieving ones saying that they ought to inherit what had belonged to their fathers, Majuizas, king of the Saracens, who lived in our own times, was made umpire. He immediately kindled a large fire, and prayed Christ, who had deigned to wear this on his head for our salvation, to decide the question. The napkin was thrown into the fire, but rose out of it again most rapidly, and floated along, as if in sport, through the air; and at last, whilst both parties were looking on, it gently lowered itself into the bosom of one of the Christians, and was the next morning kissed and venerated by all the people. The length of it was eight feet. There is another rather larger in the same church, made by Saint Mary, having figures of the twelve Apostles, and of our Lord himself. One side of it is red, and the other green.

CHAPTER VI.

OF THE PLACES NEAR JERUSALEM, AND THE CHURCH IN THE VALLEY OF JEHOSEPHAT, WHERE SAINT MARY WAS BURIED.

THE country round Jerusalem is rocky and mountainous. The ground on the north, from that city to Arimathæa, is, at intervals, rough and stony. There are open valleys covered with thorns extending all the way to the region of Thanitis; but from Ælia to Cæsarea of Palestine, though some narrow and craggy places are found for a short distance, yet the principle part of the way is a level plain, interspersed with olive-yards: the distance is seventy-five miles. The length of the Land of Promise from Dan over to Beersheba is a hundred and sixty miles, and from Joppa to Bethlehem forty-six miles. Near Jerusalem and the wall of the Temple is Gehennon, which is the Valley of Jehoshaphat, extending from north to south, and through it flows the brook Cedron, when it is swelled by a fall of rain. This valley, forming a small level plain, is well watered and woody, and full of delightful things: formerly there was in it a place dedicated to Baal. Here was the tower of King Jehoshaphat, containing his tomb; on the right side of it was a separate chamber, cut out of the rock of Mount Olivet, containing two hollow sepulchres, one of the old Simeon, the other of Joseph the husband of Saint Mary. In the same valley is the round church of Saint Mary, divided by slabs of stone; in the upper part are four altars; on the eastern side below there is another, and to the right of it an empty tomb, in which Saint Mary is said to have reposed for a time: but who removed her, or when this took place, no one can say. On entering this chamber, you see on the right hand side a stone inserted in the wall, on which Christ knelt when he prayed on the night in which he was betrayed; and the marks of his knees are still seen in the stone, as if it had been as soft as wax.

CHAPTER VII.

MOUNT OLIVET, AND THE CHURCH FOUNDED UPON IT, WHERE OUR LORD ASCENDED TO HEAVEN.

THE Mount of Olives is five miles distant from Jerusalem, and is equal in height to Mount Sion, but exceeds it in breadth and length; it bears few trees except vines and olive-trees, and is fruitful in wheat and barley, for the nature of that soil is not calculated for bearing things of large or heavy growth, but grass and flowers. On the very top of it, where our Lord ascended into heaven, is a large round church, having about it three vaulted porches. For the inner house could not be vaulted and covered, because of the passage of our Lord's body; but it has an altar on the east side, covered with a narrow roof. In the midst of it are to be seen the last prints of our Lord's feet, and the sky appears open above where he ascended; and though the earth is daily carried away by believers, yet still it remains as before, and retains the same impression of the feet. Near this lies a brazen wheel, as high as a man's neck, having an entrance towards the west, with a great lamp hanging above it on a pulley, and burning night and day. In the western part of the same church are eight windows; and eight lamps, hanging opposite to them by cords, cast their light through the glass as far as Jerusalem; this light is said to strike the hearts of the beholders with a sort of joy and humility. Every year, on the day of the Ascension, when mass is ended, a strong blast of wind is said to come down, and to cast to the ground all that are in the church. The whole of that night lanterns are kept burning there, so that the mountain and the country beneath appear not only lighted up, but actually to be on fire. Of this church, also, I have thought proper to add below a resemblance.

(The drawing is missing.)

The monument of Lazarus is indicated by a church built on the same spot, and a large monastery in a field at Bethany, in the midst of a large grove of olives. Bethany is fifteen furlongs from Jerusalem. There is also a third church on the same mountain, towards the northern side of Bethany, where our Lord spoke to his disciples, before he suffered, concerning the day of judgment.

CHAPTER VIII.

OF THE SITUATION OF BETHLEHEM, AND THE CHURCH WHERE OUR LORD WAS BORN; AND OF THE TOMBS OF DAVID AND HIERONYMUS, AND THE THREE SHEPHERDS.

BETHLEHEM is six miles distant from Jerusalem, towards the south. It is situated on a narrow ridge, surrounded on every side by valleys: it is a mile long from west to east, and has a low wall built along the edge of the brow of the hill. At its eastern angle there is a sort of natural cave, the outer part of which is said to have been the place of our Lord's birth; the inside is called "Our Lord's Manger." The whole of this cave is covered within with beautiful marble, over the place where especially our Lord is said to have been born. It has above it the great church of St. Mary. Near the wall is a hollow stone, which received back from the wall the first water in which our Lord's body was washed, when it was thrown away, and still retains the same. If by any accident or service it has been emptied, it nevertheless becomes again, in a short time, as full as before. To the north of Bethlehem, in a neighbouring valley, is the tomb of David, in the middle of the church, covered with a low stone, and with a lamp placed above it. In a church which stands in an adjoining valley, to the south, is the tomb of Jerome. Moreover, on the eastern side, in the tower of Ader, that is, of the Flock, at the distance of a thousand paces from the city, is a church, containing monuments of the three shepherds who were present at our Lord's birth. I have stated these facts on the authority of Bishop Arculph. But Erras writes in plain terms, that David was buried in Jerusalem, in the King's-way, which leads from Ælia to Cedron; that Bethlehem is to the east of it, and to the west is the tomb of Rachel, having her name inscribed upon it even to this day.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE SITE OF HEBRON, AND OF THE MONUMENTS OF THE FATHERS AND OF ADAM.

HEBRON, once a city, and the capital of David's kingdom, shows only by its ruins what it was formerly. It lies in a broad plain, twenty-two miles distant from Ælia. One furlong to the east of it is a double cave in the valley, where are the tombs of the patriarchs enclosed by a square wall, with their heads lying to the north. Each of the tombs is covered with a single stone, worked like the stones of a church, and of a white colour, for those of the patriarchs. Adam's is of meaner and more common workmanship, and lies not far from them at the farthest northern extremity. There are also some poorer and smaller monuments of three women. The hill Mamre is a thousand paces from the monuments, and is full of grass and flowers, having a flat plain on the top. In the northern part of it is Abraham's oak, a stump about twice the height of a man, enclosed in a church. Passing through Hebron towards the north, one sees to the left a mountain of no great size, covered with fir-trees, at a distance of three thousand paces from Hebron. Fir-wood is carried from this place to Jerusalem on camels, for carriages and waggons are seldom seen throughout the whole of Judæa.

CHAPTER X.

OF JERICHO AND THE HOLY PLACES IN THOSE PARTS.

JERICHO lies to the East of Ælia, and is distant from it nineteen thousand paces. It has been three times levelled with the ground; and the house of Rahab, in reward for her faith, is the only one which remains; for its walls are still standing, though without a roof. The place where the city stood now contains corn-fields and vineyards. Between this and the Jordan, which is about five or six miles distant, are large groves of palm-trees, with small plains interspersed, and inhabitants of the race of the Canaanites. The twelve stones, which Joshua Jericho and

its vicinity.ordered to be taken out of the Jordan, lie in the church of Galgatis, against the wall on each side. Each of them is so heavy that two men could hardly lift it: one of them has been by some accident broken in two, but the pieces have been again united by means of iron. Near Jericho is a fountain of plentiful water, good to drink and fit for irrigation, though it formerly was very ill adapted for fertilizing the ground, and very offensive to the taste; but it was purified by Elisha the Prophet, who threw a vessel of salt into it.

Around lies a plain, seventy furlongs in length and twenty broad, in which are gardens of extraordinary beauty, with various kinds of palm-trees, and swarms of bees of surpassing excellence. Opobalsam, also, is here produced, which bears this name from the following circumstance: — The countrymen cut narrow channels in the bark with sharp stones, and the sap gradually oozing out through these openings, forms itself into pearl-like drops. Now the Greek word *ope* signifies *a cavern*, or opening. They say the cypress and myrobalanum are there produced. The water of the fountains, like other things, is there most excellent; in summer it is cold, in winter lukewarm: the air is so mild that they wear linen garments in the winter. The city itself is built in the plain, which it overlooks, and it is bare of animals; for the soil is sickly and hungry, and therefore abandoned by inhabitants. From the territory of the city Scythopolis to the region of Sodom and Asphaltis, extends an open country. Over against this is a mountain above the river Jordan, extending from the city Julias to Zoar, which borders on Arabia Petrea, where also there is a mountain called the Iron Mountain. Between the two mountains is a plain, which the ancients called the Great Plain: Aulon, or the Great

Plain.its Hebrew name is Aulon. The length of it is two hundred and thirty furlongs; in breadth it is a hundred and twenty: it begins at the village of Gennabara, and ends at the lake Asphaltus. The Jordan divides it in the middle, and the banks are rendered most luxuriant by the deposits of the river; so that the produce of the trees is everywhere most abundant along the margin of the stream, but elsewhere it is rather scanty; for the soil, except where the

river runs, is dry and barren.

CHAPTER XI.

OF THE RIVER JORDAN AND THE SEA OF GALILEE, OTHERWISE CALLED THE SEA OF TIBERIAS.

THE sources of the Jordan itself are commonly thought to be in the province of Phœnicia, at the foot of Mount Libanus, where Panium, or Cæsarea Philippi, is situated. This town, Panium, so called as descriptive of the cave from which the river Jordan flows, is said to have been built up and adorned by King Agrippa, with wonderful magnificence. In the country of Trachonitis, there is a fountain, after the likeness of a wheel, from which it has received the name of Phiale, fifteen miles distant from Cæsarea, full of sweet water, and having this peculiarity, that it never overflows, and yet never can be diminished. Philip, the tetrarch of this district, threw straw into this fountain, which was again cast up by the river in Panium. It is therefore evident that the sources of the Jordan are in Phiale; but that, after passing underground, it resumes its course in Panium, and entering the lake, flows right through its shallows, and from thence proceeds without any break, for the space of fifteen miles, to a city named Julias, and thence divides the lake of Gennesar half-way on its whole course. After this it winds about for a long distance, and as it enters the Asphaltian, *i.e.* the Dead Sea, it presents a remarkable mass of waters. The colour of it is white, like milk; and for this reason it is distinguished by a long track in the Dead Sea. Sea of Gallilee. Now, the Sea of Gennesar, otherwise called the Sea of Galilee, is surrounded by large woods, and is a hundred and forty stadia in length. Its water is sweet and fit to drink; for it receives no mud or other coarse substance from any marshy pools, but is surrounded on all sides by a sandy shore, and has in its neighbourhood many pleasant towns. On the east lie Julias and Hippos; on the west is Tiberias, famous for its salubrious hot springs: the different kinds of fish which it contains are better, both in taste and in appearance, than those which are found in the other lake.

CHAPTER XII.

OF THE DEAD SEA, AND THE NATURE OF THE COUNTRY WHICH BORDERS ON IT.

THE Dead Sea is five hundred and eighty furlongs in length, and extends as far as the Zoari in Arabia. Its breadth is one hundred and fifty furlongs, as far as the neighbourhood of Sodom. For it is certain that it flowed also out of some salt-pits, after the burning of Sodom and Gomorrha and the adjacent cities. But it appears to those who look at it from the top of Mount Olivet, that the collision of the waves causes salt of a very strong kind to be thrown up, which, when dried in the sun, is collected, and is of considerable service to many of the neighbouring nations. Salt is said to be produced in a different manner from this in a certain mountain of Sicily, where large blocks of the strongest and most useful salt are hewn out of the earth: this is called rock-salt. The name of the Dead Sea is derived from this circumstance — that it does not sustain any kind of living thing; for there are neither fish in its depths, nor water fowl swimming upon its surface. The Dead Sea, &c. Indeed, if by accident the river Jordan, when swollen by storms, carries down any fish into it, they immediately die, and their dead bodies are seen floating on the languid waters. They say that a lighted candle will float without being upset, and that when the light is put out, it sinks; but that it is difficult for any thing else to be made stop at the bottom; and that every living thing, however different, and with whatever violence thrown in, instantly rises again. Indeed it is recorded that Vespasian ordered some persons who could not swim to be thrown in with their hands tied behind their backs, and all of them rose and floated on the top. The water is bitter and unfertilizing, of a darker colour than other water, and tastes as if had been burnt. It is certain that lumps of bitumen with a black liquor are seen swimming in the water, and the natives go out in boats and collect them. They say that the bitumen sticks together most firmly, and cannot be divided by any instrument of steel,* but dissolves in urine, or in the blood of a woman. It is of use to fasten ships, and is applied medicinally to the human body. The whole region still bears marks of the judgment inflicted upon it. Apples of a most beautiful appearance are produced there, which make the mouths of the beholders water, but when gathered, they rot and moulder to ashes, and send forth smoke, as if still acted on by fire. In summer an excessive vapour floats over the whole plain; by which cause, and the great drought co-operating together, the air becomes corrupted, and the inhabitants are afflicted with dreadful distempers.

CHAPTER XIII.

OF THE PLACE WHERE OUR LORD WAS BAPTIZED.

IN the place where our Lord was baptized, stands a wooden cross as high as a man's neck, and sometimes covered by the water. From it to the further, that is, the eastern bank, is a sling's cast; and on the nearer bank is a large monastery of St. John the Baptist standing on a rising ground, and famous for a very handsome church, from which they descend to the cross by a bridge supported on arches, to offer up their prayers. In the further part of the river is a quadrangular church, supported on four stone arches, covered with burnt tiles, where our Lord's clothes are said to have been kept whilst he was baptized. Men do not enter this church, but come together round it from all quarters; from the place where the Jordan leaves the Sea of Galilee, to where it enters the Dead Sea, a journey of eight days.

CHAPTER XIV.

OF THE LOCUSTS, THE WILD HONEY, AND THE FOUNTAIN OF ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST.

IT was the smallest species of locusts which formed the food of John the Baptist, as is clear from the practice of the present day. Their bodies are short and slender, about the size of a finger, and are easily captured on the plants. When boiled in oil, they form a plain and humble kind of food. In the same desert are trees having broad round leaves of a white colour and sweet taste, naturally weak, and easily bruised by the hands for eating. This is said to be what is meant by wood or wild honey. In the same place is shown St. John the Baptist's fountain of the clearest water, having a stone roof covered with mortar.

CHAPTER XV.

OF JACOB'S FOUNTAIN, NEAR SICHEM.

NEAR the city of Sichem, now called Neapolis, is a church divided in four; that is, made in the form of a cross. In the midst of it is Jacob's well, forty cubits deep, and as wide as from the side to the ends of the fingers. It was from this well that our Lord vouchsafed to ask water of the Samaritan woman.

CHAPTER XVI.

OF TIBERIAS, CAPARNAUM, NAZARETH, AND THE HOLY PLACES IN THOSE PARTS.

THE place in which our lord blessed the loaves and fishes on this side of the Sea of Galilee, to the north of the city of Tiberias, is a plain, grassy and level, which has never been ploughed since those times, nor has ever been built upon: but there is the same fountain there from which those persons drank. Those who go from Ælia to Caparnaum, pass through Tiberias, and from thence along the Sea of Galilee to the place where the loaves were blessed, from which it is no great distance to Caparnaum on the borders of Zebulon and Naphtali. The town has no walls, and lies on a narrow piece of ground between a mountain and lake. On the sea-coast towards the east it extends a long way, having the mountain on the north, and lake on the south. Nazareth has no walls, but large houses, and two great churches. One of these is in the midst of the city, built on two arches, where formerly was a house, in which our Lord was nursed when an infant. This church is built on two eminences, with arches connecting them, and has under it between the eminences a clear fountain, from which all the citizens draw water in vessels with pulleys for the use of the church. In the other church was the house in which the Angel came to the blessed Mary.

CHAPTER XVII.

OF MOUNT TABOR, AND THE THREE CHURCHES THEREON.

MOUNT TABOR is situated in the midst of the plain of Galilee, and is three miles distant from Gennesareth, towards the north. It is round on all sides, covered with grass and flowers, and thirty furlongs high. Its top forms a pleasant meadow, twenty-three furlongs wide, whereon is a large monastery, surrounded by a thick wood, and containing three churches, according to the words of Peter, "Let us make here three tabernacles." The place is surrounded by a wall, and contains some stately edifices.

CHAPTER XVIII.

OF DAMASCUS.

Damascus. DAMASCUS is situated in a plain, and surrounded by a broad and ample circuit of walls, strengthened with numerous towers, and intersected by four great rivers. The Christians frequent the church of Saint John the Baptist, but the king of the Saracens with his people established and consecrated another. On all sides beyond the walls are numerous groves of olives. From Tabor to Damascus it is a journey of eight days.

CHAPTER XIX.

OF ALEXANDRIA, THE RIVER NILE, AND THE CHURCH IN WHICH MARK THE EVANGELIST IS BURIED.

ALEXANDRIA extends to a great length from east to west. On the south it is bounded by the mouths of the Nile, and on the north by the Lake Mareotis. Its port is more difficult than the others, and has a resemblance to the human body; for in its head it is sufficiently ample, but when there are waves it is too narrow, because it admits the tide of the sea, together with such ships as run into the port to recover themselves and refit. But when one has passed the narrow neck and mouth of the harbour, the sea, still following the likeness of the human body, spreads itself far and wide. On its right hand side is a small port, in which is the Pharos, a large tower, which is every night lighted up with torches, lest sailors might mistake their way in the dark and dash against the rocks, in their attempt to find the entrance, particularly as this is much impeded and disturbed by the waves dashing to and fro. The port, however, is always calm, and in magnitude about thirty furlongs. Towards Egypt, as one enters the city, there is a large church on the right, in which reposes St. Mark the Evangelist. Tomb of

St. Mark. The body is buried in the eastern part of the church before the altar, with a monument over it of squared marble. Along the Nile the Egyptians are in the habit of constructing numerous mounds to prevent the irruption of the water, which, if the mounds were to be broken down by the neglect of the guardians, would not irrigate, but inundate and destroy the lands beneath. The Egyptians who inhabit the plains over the canals, make their houses by laying transverse planks thereon.

CHAPTER XX.

OF CONSTANTINOPLE, AND THE CHURCH THEREIN WHICH CONTAINS OUR LORD'S CROSS.

CONSTANTINOPLE is bounded on all sides except the north by the sea, which extends from the great sea to the walls of the city, sixty thousand paces, and from the walls to the mouths of the Danube, forty thousand. The circuit of the walls, which are angular, according to the line of sea, is about twelve thousand paces. Constantine was at first disposed to build it in Cilicia, near the sea which separates Europe and Asia, but on a certain night all the iron tools were carried away, and, when men were sent to fetch them, they were found on the European side: for there it was the will of God that it should be built. In this city is a church of wonderful workmanship, called the church of Saint Sophia, built up from its foundation of a circular shape, domed in, and surrounded by three walls. It is supported to a great height on columns and arches, and has in its inmost part, on the north side, a large and beautiful closet, wherein is a wooden chest with a wooden lid, containing three pieces of our Lord's cross, that is to say, the long timber cut in two, and the transverse part of the same holy cross. These pieces are exhibited for the adoration of the people three times only in the year, namely, on the day of our Lord's supper, the day of the preparation, and on the Holy Sabbath. On the first of these, the chest, which is two cubits long and one broad, is set out on a golden altar with the holy cross exposed to view: the Emperor first approaches, and after him all the different ranks of laymen, in order, kiss and worship it: on the following day the Empress and all the married women and virgins do the same; but on the third day the bishops and different orders of the clergy do it, and then the chest is shut and carried back to the closet before mentioned. As long as it remains open on the altar, a wonderful odor spreads through the whole church. For an odoriferous liquor like oil flows from the knots of the holy wood, the least drop of which cures every complaint which a man may be afflicted with.

“*Descripsi breviter finesque situsque locorum,
Pagine sacra magis quæ memoranda refert,
Beda, sequens veterum monumenta simulque novorum
Charta magistrorum quæ sonet inspiciens.
Da, Jesu, patriam semper tendamus ad illam,
Quam beat æternum visis summa tui.*”

Thus have I sought in these few words to trace
The form and site of every holy place.
For this memorials of past times have brought,
And from each writer new instruction sought.

Grant, Jesus, that in Heaven we all my rest,
And be for ever with Thy presence blest!

CHAPTER XXI.

RECAPITULATION.

THUS much have I written concerning the Holy Places, following, to the best of my knowledge, the truth of history, Adamnan referred to. and in particular the dictation of Arculph, Bishop of Gaul, which Adamnan, that priest so learned in Holy Scripture, hath set down in his jagged style, and comprised in three books. For the above-named bishop, from a desire to see the Holy Places, left his native country and went to the Land of Promise, where he stopped two months at Jerusalem, having an old monk, named Peter, for his guide and interpreter. He then with great zeal visited every thing all round, which he had longed to see, and travelled to Alexandria, Damascus, Constantinople, and Sicily. On his way home, the vessel in which he sailed, after much beating about, was carried by contrary winds to our island, that is, to Britain; and Arculph, after certain hazards, came to the above-named venerable man, Adamnan, and explained to him his voyage, and what he had seen. Adamnan was thus enabled to compose a most beautiful history thereof. From this book we have gleaned a little, and having compared it with the books of the ancients, have sent it for your perusal, beseeching you, by all means, to relieve your worldly labours, not by indolence or licentiousness, but by holy reading and earnest prayer.

THE SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORLD



Translated by J. A. Giles

THE FIRST.

OF the seven wonders of the world, made by the hand of man, the first is the Capitol at Rome, the very salvation of the inhabitants, and greater than a whole city. In it were statues of the nations subdued by the Romans, or images of their gods, and on the breasts of the statues were inscribed the names of the nations which had been conquered, with bells hanging from their necks. Priests or watchmen attended on these by turns, day and night, and showed much care in watching them. If either of them should move, the bell made a noise, and so they knew what nation was rebelling against the Romans. When they knew this, they communicated the information by word of mouth or by writing to the Roman princes, that they might know against what nation they were next to turn the Roman arms.

THE SECOND.

The second is the Light-house of Alexandria, which was founded on four glass arches, twenty paces deep beneath the sea. The wonder is, how such large arches could be made, or how they could be conveyed without breaking; how the foundations, which are cemented together above, could adhere to them, or how the cement could stand firm under the water; and why the arches are not broken, and why the foundations cast in above do not slip off.

THE THIRD.

The third is the figure of the Colossus in the island of Rhodes, a hundred and thirty-six feet long, and cast of melted metal. The wonder is how such an immense mass could be cast, or how it could be set up and not fall.

THE FOURTH.

The fourth wonder is the iron figure of Belerophon on horseback, which hangs suspended in the air over the city, and has neither chains nor any thing else to support it; but great magnetic stones are placed in vaults, and so it is retained in assumption (*position*), and remains in balanced measure. Now the calculation of its weight is about five thousand pounds of iron.

THE FIFTH.

The fifth wonder is the Theatre of Heraclea, carved out of one piece of marble, so that all the cells and rooms of the wall, and the dens of the beasts, are made out of one solid stone. It is supported on four arches carved out of the same stone: and no one can whisper in the whole circle so low, either to himself or to another, without being heard by every one who is in the circle of the building.

THE SIXTH.

The sixth wonder is the Bath, which is such, that when Apollotaneus has lighted it with one candle of consecration, it keeps the hot baths continually burning without being attended to.

THE SEVENTH.

The seventh wonder is the Temple of Diana, on four pillars. Its first foundations are arched drains; then it increases gradually, upper stones being placed on the former arches. Thus: upon these four are placed eight pillars and eight arches; then in the third row it increases in a like proportion, and stones still higher are placed thereon. On the eight are placed sixteen, and on the sixteen thirty-two; the fourth row of stones is on the fifth row of arches, and sixty-four pillars complete the plan of this remarkable building.

THE LIFE OF THE HOLY CONFESSOR SAINT FELIX



Translated by J. A. Giles

This biography is an adaptation into prose of four poems on Saint Felix by Paulinus of Nola. Felix of Burgundy, also known as Felix of Dunwich (died 8 March 647 or 648), was the first bishop of the East Angles. He is widely credited as introducing Christianity to the kingdom of East Anglia. Almost all that is known about the saint originates from *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, completed by Bede in c.731 and the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. Bede praised Felix for delivering “all the province of East Anglia from long-standing unrighteousness and unhappiness”.



St. Felix from the reredos of the church of St. Peter Mancroft, Norwich

THE LIFE OF THE HOLY CONFESSOR SAINT FELIX.

The blessed triumph of St. Felix, which, with God's aid, he achieved in Nola, a city of Campania, has been described by Paulinus, bishop of that same city, most beautifully and most amply in hexameter verse; but as this is adapted rather to poetical than to plain readers, it has seemed good to me, for the benefit of many, to explain the same history of the holy confessor in prose, and thus to imitate the industry of that man, who translated the martyrdom of the blessed Cassianus from the metrical work of Prudentius into simple and common language.

Saint Felix was born in Nola, in Campania, of a Syrian father, whose name was Hermias, and who coming from the East settled at Nola, and there begot a son Felix, to whom he left a rich worldly inheritance, to which however he himself preferred the gift of heritage promised us in Heaven. He had a brother named Hermias after his father, to take part in the family patrimony, but he had adopted a line of life repugnant to the character of Felix, and became unworthy of eternal happiness. For he studied only worldly goods, and preferred to become a soldier of Cæsar rather than of Christ; whereas, on the contrary, Felix (the Happy), following up the mystery of his name by his actions, devoted himself to the service of God from his boyhood, and showing forth fresh virtues every day, first undertook the duties of reader in the church; and afterwards becoming exorcist, began to cast out unclean spirits from those who were possessed. In this capacity his merits shone more and more, and speedily elevated him to the rank of priest. Nor were his mind and actions unworthy of his rank, as the storm of persecution, which followed, made manifest. For at that time the unbelievers raised a violent persecution, and heavily assailed the church. But the gates of death did not prevail against the gates of the daughter of Sion, so as to deter men from declaring their Maker's praise. And when the authors of this treason had tried their first mad assault upon the leaders of the truth and faith of our Lord, and conspired together to slay the bishops and priests, or to make them recant their faith, to the terror of the rest, it came to pass that some of the leaders of the enemy came to Nola, to deliver over to torment its bishop, Maximus, a man venerable for learning, piety and his gray hairs. But he, perceiving this, and mindful of our Lord's precept, "When they shall persecute you in one city, flee ye to another," escaped for a time into a distant place of refuge, leaving the defence of the city to the priest Felix, whom he embraced as a son, and desired to have as his successor in the see. When the persecutors were unable to find the bishop, they proceeded without delay to lay hands on Felix, and determined to cast him down from his far famed constancy of virtue either by persuasion and promises or by threats and punishment. He was therefore seized by his fierce adversaries, and, supported in his soul by divine consolation, thrown into

prison, where his hands and neck were enclosed in chains, his feet tied with a thong, and broken shells scattered under him, that in his terror and the chillness of the place he might be prevented by their painful galling from enjoying sleep or rest. Meanwhile the bishop, who had fled for safety to the mountains, was suffering no less martyrdom than if he had been thrown into prison or given to the flames. Solicitude for his flock preyed upon his mind; whilst his body suffered from hunger and the severe cold of winter; for he lay among the brushwood without food or covering, and spent one whole anxious day and night in prayer. Nor was it surprising that such a load of misfortunes should almost sink into the grave an old man exhausted by long fasting. But the Divine Love, to show how great was the merit of the blessed confessor Felix, sent down an angel to pluck him from his chains and send him forth to seek the bishop and bring him home. There were others in the prison, but the angel appeared to him alone, shining in a brilliant light which filled the whole house. Felix was alarmed at the light and at the angel's voice, and at first thought that he was dreaming. When the angel told him to rise and follow him out, he said that he could not, because he was bound in chains and carefully guarded. The angel told him again to rise without any impediment from the chains, and immediately his bonds fell from his hands, neck, and feet. By a wonderful course of events, he led him out, though the door which was open to him was closed to the others, and they passed through the guards without their knowledge, whilst the angel, like the pillar of Moses, guarded Felix and lighted his path, until he was clear of his enemies. When the blessed confessor had come to the desert where the bishop had taken refuge, he found him panting for breath, and his joy at having found him alive was damped by the probability of his immediate death. He clasped the aged father and kissed him, tried to inspire life into him with his breath, and heat into his cold limbs by the application of his own body. But when with all his cries and exertions he could rouse neither his mind nor body to life, and had neither fire to warm nor aliment to sustain his cold and famished frame, he suddenly thought of a salutary plan, and bending his knees in prayer, besought the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ to aid him from heaven, in fulfilling the required duties towards his holy father. He was immediately heard, and saw a bunch of grapes hanging on a thorn close by. He perceived that it was a gift from Him who is the Author of nature and Creator of all things, and who brought water out of the stony rock, and, when He pleased, converted it into wine. Rejoiced at this gift of Divine Love, he gathered the bunch of grapes, and pressed it to the mouth of the dying prelate; but his teeth were closed as if in death, all sensation of his heart and breath had ceased, and he was unable to receive that which was offered to him. At length the pious priest by good fortune forced open his parched lips, and poured into his mouth as much of the juice of the grape as he was able. The father, at the taste, recovered both sensation and breath: his eyes opened, and his tongue, which had stuck to his dry palate, attempted to articulate words. After some time he revived, and seeing that it

was Felix who had come to seek him, embraced him with paternal love, and asked him why he had come so late, saying, "Where have you lingered so long, my son? for God promised me some time ago that you should come. But you see that, though I yield for the moment, I have faithfully preserved my firmness of mind, as the place of my retreat clearly proves. I might have fled to some village or city, where I should have been safe; if my faith had been of no value to me, or less dear than life. But, you see, I have avoided all the haunts of men, and have fled to the mountains, trusting myself to the grace and protection of God, that, according to his good pleasure, he might preserve me for this life or exalt me to a better. Nor did my trust in God deceive me, as it proved by your coming; which has recalled me, so to speak, from death to life. Wherefore, my son, finish your work of piety, place me on your shoulders, and carry me home. Felix complied with alacrity, and carried home the bishop to his house, which was in charge of only one old woman: so entirely removed from all worldly cares was this venerable prelate! Felix aroused her by knocking at the door, and when she opened the door he committed the bishop to her care. The bishop thanked the holy Felix for his labour of love, and placing his right hand upon his head, gave him his fatherly blessing. The priest, departing, concealed himself in the same way for a few days in his own house, until the storm of persecution had passed over. As soon as this happened, he left his concealment and restored himself to the sight of his congratulating citizens. He went about every where, consoling and confirming their minds with words of exhortation; for, during the bitterness of the late persecution, they had been terribly cast down. He taught them not only by his word, but by his example, to despise the prosperities and adversities of this world, and to seek only the joys of the heavenly country, to fear alone the anger of the Heavenly Judge. But the persecution was not yet over; Felix was again sought for, the enemy came to his house, and again essayed to seize him and deliver him over to death. He was by chance away from home, standing in the market-place with his friends, and teaching to the surrounding people, as was his wont, the word of God. His adversaries, hearing that he was there, rushed thither with drawn swords; but when they came to the place, either his countenance or their hearts were changed by a sudden act of Divine Providence, and they no longer knew him, though up to that day they had known him well. They therefore asked the priest himself where Felix was: the prudent man perceived that it was the work of God, and replied, smiling, "I do not know the man you are looking for." And in this he spoke the truth; for nobody does know himself. Upon this the persecutors turned their attention elsewhere, and asked those whom they met, where Felix was. One of them, by chance, ignorant of their motives, and thinking they were out of their wits, began to reprove them for their folly in not knowing the man they had been talking to, and at the same time pointed out to them where he was gone. Fired to madness they rushed after Felix, who, warned of their coming by the multitude of citizens that preceded, and by the clamours of the

people who were confounded at the enemy's approach, withdrew to a secret place, which had no other defence than a fragment of a half ruined wall. No sooner, however, had the man of God entered that place, than he was protected by a work of the Divine hand; for a mound of rubbish suddenly arose and closed in the place, and a spider, by Divine warning, immediately hung its floating web on the abandoned spot. The adversaries approached and halted in awe, saying among themselves, "Is it not foolish for us to look for any one in this place? It is quite clear that no one has been here before ourselves; for, if any one had entered, these spider's webs could not have remained whole, for even the smallest flies will sometimes break through them. The man who told us he was here must have done so deceitfully, to delay us longer from finding him. Let us return, and refrain from searching this place, the very appearance of which shows that no one has been here before us." Thus foiled, they retraced their steps in anger, and fired with rage against him who had by his deceit led them to the place, to witness the wisdom of our pious Creator and Protector. Surely, the highest walls sometimes betray a beleaguered city, as well as defend it: for Christ protected his humble servant from detection and imprisonment at the hands of his armed enemies by a frail spider's web: as the venerable father Paulinus says truly on this subject,— "Where Christ is with us, a spider's web our wall shall be; where Christ is not, our wall a spider's web shall be." The evening was approaching when his enemies departed; and Felix, when they were gone, withdrew to a safer place of refuge, rejoicing in the Divine protection, and singing within himself,— "Though I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death, I will not fear evil, for Thou art with me." When day dawned, he withdrew to a more retired place among the buildings of the city, where for six whole months he lived apart from men, relying on the protection of the Divine presence, according to the words of the Psalmist—"His countenance was hidden from the fear of men;" and Providence fed him during this long space of time in a manner wonderful and unknown to men. For in a neighbouring house there lived a devout woman, whose services, though she was unconscious of the matter, the Lord, who is the fountain and origin of all knowledge, made use of to accomplish his designs. This woman used to bake bread and cook other provisions, in her own bakehouse, and carry the surplus to the place where Felix was concealed, where she laid them down in such a way that he took them, and she never knew that she had either come or gone away; and believing that the food which she had prepared was at home, she always forgot that she had put it there, but never forgot to bring it. Thus they say the holy father remained for the space of six months in this obscure and narrow residence, apart from the society of men, but not abandoned by Heaven; and thus also he was fed on humble fare, but ministered to him by the Almighty; whilst, moreover, he is said during this time to have enjoyed the privilege of intercourse with the Most High. There was also an old cistern in the same house, which supplied him with water; and though this was dried up

by the heat of summer, yet water for his nourishment never failed the holy Felix. For the merciful Author of our salvation, who, when all around was dry, caused the fleece to drop with water, sent down from heaven, through the still and bright sky, a secret rain, to refresh his fainting servant. At the end of six months, he was admonished by Divine Providence to come forth from his retirement, as the fury of the persecution had now ceased. As soon as he appeared in public, he was received by all with congratulations, as if he was come from Paradise; and he began from time to time to confirm their faith, which had been much shaken by the persecution. Meanwhile, God's chosen servant, Bishop Maximus, died at an extreme old age, and Felix was at once, with the consent of all, elected to the bishopric. This most worthy confessor and teacher of the faith faithfully enacted in his own conduct, the precepts which he had taught. But, to show what exalted humility was in his heart, he excused himself from undertaking this office, saying, that his fellow priest, Quintus, was more worthy of it than himself, because he had been raised to priest's orders seven days before himself. This suggestion was adopted, and Quintus was made bishop; but he, with great humility, deferred in every thing to Felix, and caused him to deliver the sermon to the people instead of himself; and whilst he ruled, as far as regarded outward authority, Felix was the fountain head of doctrine. To his constancy in behalf of the faith which he professed, and his distinguished humility, he added the merit of voluntary poverty. For he originally possessed, by inheritance from his father, many farms and houses, and much money: but when he was proscribed during the persecution, he lost all. When peace was restored to the church, and he had it in his power to resume his rights, he would not do so. His friends tried to persuade him that he might reclaim them with much interest, and spend the money or give it to the poor; but he would not be prevailed on, saying, "All things are lawful, but all things are not expedient; far be it from me, that I should set about recovering my earthly possessions, as if those in heaven, which I have preferred to them, are not sufficient. Rather let me be poor, and follow in spirit after Jesus, that I may reap a more abundant reward in his heavenly kingdom. Nor do I doubt that He who saved me from chains, and the dark prison, and so long sustained me away from the face of men, will feed me through the rest of my life, if I cast all my care upon Him." Such was the humility of the holy father: he would only take back a little garden as his own property, and three acres of land, for which he paid a rent. Moreover, he cultivated these with his own hands, without the assistance even of a single servant, and he took delight in bestowing on the poor a part of their produce. He displayed the same frugality in his dress, and was content with a single garment, which sometimes was hardly enough for him. Every thing superfluous he gave to the poor; and if by chance he obtained a second garment, he speedily gave to some poor naked wretch the better of the two.

Such were the piety, reputation, and merits of Felix. He died full of days and good works; and following in the track of the old fathers, was received

into everlasting glory, as is evident from many signs displayed in the church wherein he was buried.

There was a certain countryman, poor in worldly goods, but rich in faith, who supported himself in straitened circumstances by the possession of two oxen, which he used in his own work, and also let out for hire to his neighbours. These oxen, which he took great care of, were one morning missing; and their owner, when he discovered the loss, without the slightest idea of searching for and finding them, ran to the church of St. Felix, where he threw himself prostrate on the ground before the doors of the sacred house; and, fixing his eyes on the earth, besought the holy man to restore him his oxen which he had lost, and vowed never to leave the church until he should recover them. He remained there all the day, uttering cries which savoured of a rustic dialect, but nevertheless evinced the faith which was in his heart. When evening came on he was ejected by the multitude, and thrust out of the sacred edifice. He then returned home, where he continued his lamentations all the night. But, because every one who asks receives, and who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened, and, as the Psalmist says, "The Lord hath heard the desire of the poor," — at midnight, when every thing was buried in sleep, and the poor man alone was kept awake by poverty and sorrow for his loss, on a sudden, wonderful to be related, the oxen which he was seeking came to the door, as if by Divine interposition; having returned safe from the hands of the robbers, through the wild country and the darkness of night, to their owner's house. They knocked with their horns against the door of the house, to signify that they were come back; but the poor man, in fear and trembling, thinking that the thieves were returned, durst not open the door, until the oxen, as if understanding the cause of his delay, informed him who they were by lowing. The rustic, having thus recovered his cattle, acted by no means like a rustic on the occasion, but like a wise man and a faithful Christian; for the first thing which he did in the morning was to offer up thanks to his Redeemer. He went to the church of St. Felix, and took his oxen along with him. He joyfully told every one who met him on his way thither, and also those who were at the church, the benefits which he had received from the holy confessor; and, inasmuch as by lamenting so long for his loss he had done no small injury to his eyes, he offered up a petition to St. Felix, and got them cured; so that he returned home benefited in more ways than one, and full of joy.

At this time they desired to erect a more noble building in honour of the saint; and for this purpose wished to remove two small cottages of disagreeable exterior, which stood in the way, and presented a most unsightly appearance in the vicinity of the church. With this end in view, Bishop Paulinus requested their owners to pay respect to the holy Saint Felix, and suffer their private houses to be removed, in order to beautify and improve the church. The owners, however, brutally rejected his request, and said they would part with their lives rather than their property. The bishop despaired of

being able to overcome their obstinacy; but this was speedily brought about by the Divine interposition: for one night, when all were asleep, a conflagration suddenly arose from one of those same cells, and began to spread to the neighbouring houses, apparently gaining fresh strength every moment, and likely to consume all the houses far and near. Roused by the noise and the flames, the citizens flocked together to put out the fire, by throwing water upon it; or at all events to save their property from the houses. But they found all human aid was unavailing, and they began to turn their attention to prayer. Led by the bishop, they thronged to the church of St. Felix, and on bended knees supplicated for assistance from on high. They then proceeded to the adjoining church of the Apostles, and put up the same prayer. After this, the bishop returned home, and taking a small splinter of the wood of our Lord's cross, threw it into the midst of the fire. Immediately the flames subsided, and this small fragment of wood effected what so many men, with abundance of water, had not been able to accomplish. Such, indeed, was its power, that the usual nature of things was changed; and fire, which usually consumes every thing, was itself consumed by the wood of our Lord's passion. When the conflagration was over, the citizens came in the morning to see what havoc had been committed during the night, and expected to find that they were great losers: but they found that nothing had been burnt, except what deserved to be burnt. Of the two houses before-mentioned, which even themselves wished to destroy, one was utterly consumed by the flames. The owner was put to shame by the thing; for he perceived that he had lost his house all the same, without meriting any obligation from the holy father; and immediately afterwards the owner of the other house which remained began to pull it down with his own hands, that the whole space round the church might be cleared, and be rendered worthy the merits of the saint. When all the rubbish was removed, the Bishop Paulinus persevered in rebuilding the church, and accomplished the task in three years, adding pictures, and every other proper ornament. In this church are celebrated the blessed life and ever memorable passion of Saint Felix, who, on the 14th of January finished his glorious career, and received the crown of life, which God hath promised to those which love him.

*[The end of the Book of the Life and Confession of
St. Felix, which I, Christ's servant Bede,
translated into prose out of the
metrical work of the Holy
Bishop Paulinus.]*

THE EXPLANATION OF THE APOCALYPSE



Translated by E. Marshall

LETTER OF BEDA TO EUSEBIUS.

TO THE BELOVED BROTHER, EUSEBIUS, BEDA SENDS GREETING.

THE Apocalypse of St. John, in which God was pleased to reveal by words and figures the wars and intestine tumults of the Church, seems to me, brother Eusebius, to be divided into several sections.

In the first of these, after a copious preface to strengthen the faith of the weak, and a description of the sufferings of the Lord and of the glories which followed, he sees one like unto the Son of Man clothed with the Church, Who, after He has related what has happened, or is about to happen, in the seven Churches of Asia in particular, recounts the general conflicts and victories of the whole Church. And here, designedly, in the sixth place He has foretold that the Jews are to be made subject to the Church, and that there is to be a trial of the world at large, and that He Himself will come quickly; and He places in the seventh the lukewarm Laodicea. For “when the Son of Man cometh, will He,” dost thou think, “find the faith in the earth?” (Luke 18.8)

Then in the second section, after that the four living creatures in the throne of God, and the twenty-four elders, have been described, he sees the Lamb, on the opening of the seven seals of the closed book, unfold the future conflicts and triumphs of the Church. And here, according to the custom of this book, he preserves the order unto the sixth number in the series; and then he passes by the seventh, recapitulates, and concludes the two narrations with the seventh. But the recapitulation is also itself to be understood according to its place, for sometimes he recapitulates from the commencement of suffering, sometimes from the middle period, and sometimes with a view to speak of the last affliction only, or a short time before. But this he observes as a fixed point, to recapitulate after the sixth.

Next, in the third section, under the likeness of seven angels sounding with a trumpet, he describes the various events of the Church.

In the fourth, under the figure of a woman bringing forth, and a dragon persecuting her, he reveals the toils and victories of the same Church, and assigns to both combatants their due rewards. And here the words and actions of seven angels are also recorded, but not in the same manner as above. So in mystic wisdom he almost always retains this number, for neither in his gospel nor his epistles is the same John accustomed to say anything with remissness

and brevity.

Then, in the fifth section, by seven angels he has overspread the earth with the seven last plagues.

In the sixth, he has manifested the condemnation of the great whore, that is, of the ungodly city.

In the seventh, he has shewn the ornament of the Lamb's wife, the holy Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God.

I have also thought that the seven rules of Tichonius, a man of the most learning among those of his sect (The Donatists), should be briefly enumerated, inasmuch as those who are desirous to learn, receive great assistance from them for understanding the Scriptures. The first of these is concerning the Lord and His body, when there is a transition from the Head to the body, or from the body to the Head, and yet no recession from one and the same person. For one person speaks, saying, "He set a chaplet upon me, as a bridegroom, and adorned me with an ornament as a bride" (Is. 41.10); and yet, certainly, it must be understood how much of this belongs to the Head, how much to the body; that is, how much to Christ, how much to the Church.

The second is concerning the twofold body of the Lord, or rather, concerning the true and simulated body of the Lord, as St. Augustine was better pleased that it should be termed. So the Church says "I am dark and comely, as the tents of Kedar, and as the curtains of Solomon" (Song of Solomon 1.5); for she does not say, I was dark and am comely, but she has said that she is both, because of the fellowship in sacraments, and the commingling for a time of the good and bad fish within one net, seeing that the tents of Kedar belong to Ishmael, "for that he shall not be heir with the son of the free woman" (Gal. 4.20).

The third is concerning the promises and the law, which may otherwise be expressed as concerning the spirit and the letter, or concerning grace and the commandment. This appears to St. Augustine to be itself a great question, rather than a rule to be applied to the solution of questions. For it was through failing to understand this that the Pelagians either began, or increased their heresy.

The fourth is concerning species and genus. For species is a part, but genus the whole of which it is a part, as each state is a part of the whole province, and each province a part of the whole world. These terms, accordingly, have come to the knowledge of persons in general, so that even the unlearned understand what is enjoined in any imperial command. This takes place also in respect of men, as the things which are said of Solomon are out of proportion to him; and it is only when they are referred to Christ and the Church, of which He is part, that they become clear. Yet the species is not always exceeded, for such things are often said as more evidently agree with it also, or perhaps with it alone. But when there is a transition from the species to the genus, as if Scripture were still speaking of the species, there the attention of the reader ought to be on the watch.

He lays down a fifth rule, which he names concerning times, and it may, as appears to me, also be called concerning numbers. This he states to be of force, even in the case of legitimate numbers, by the figure synecdoche. For the figure synecdoche is either to infer the whole from a part, or a part from the whole. And by this manner of speaking is the question of the resurrection of Christ also solved. For unless the last part of the day on which He suffered is taken for the whole day, that is, with the addition of the past night too, and unless the night in the latter part of which He rose again is taken for a whole day, that is, with the addition of the dawning Lord's day, there cannot be the three days and three nights, in which He foretold that He should be in the heart of the earth (Matt. 12:40). Now by legitimate numbers he means those which the divine Scripture more eminently commends, as the seventh, or tenth, or twelfth; by which, for the most part, either the whole course of time, or the perfection of anything is designated, as, "seven times in a day I sing praise unto Thee," (Ps. 98 (AV 99): 164)) is nothing else than, "His praise was ever in my mouth" (Ps. 33:2 (AV 34:1)) And they are of the same value also when they are multiplied either by ten, as seventy and seven hundred, in which case, the seventy years of Jerusalem may be taken spiritually for all the time during which the Church is among aliens; or by themselves, as ten by ten are a hundred, and twelve by twelve are a hundred and forty-four, by which number the whole body of the saints is denoted in the Apocalypse.

The sixth rule Tichonius calls recapitulation. For some things are stated in the Scriptures as if they follow in the order of time, or are related in the succession of events, when, indeed, the narration is tacitly recalled to what has been omitted. As it is said in Genesis, "These are the sons of Noah, in their tribes and their tongues. By these are the isles of the nations upon the earth overspread" (Gen. 10:32; 9:19) and immediately, "But the whole earth was of one lip, and of the same speech" (Gen. 11.1) So it seems to be stated, as if at the very time when they were dispersed, they all had one language, when rather, by a recapitulation, he was secretly adding in what manner the tongues were divided.

His seventh rule is, concerning the devil and his body. For sometimes that is stated in respect of the devil which cannot be recognised in himself, but only in his body; as the Lord saith, among other things, to the blessed Job, in exposing the deceit and power of this enemy, "Will he make many prayers to thee, or will he speak soft things to thee?" (Job 41:3). And it is not the devil himself who is anywhere read of as repentant, but his body, which, when condemned at the last, will say, "Lord, Lord, open unto us" (Matt. 25.11).

So then, if any one will observe carefully, he will find these rules to prevail in all the canonical Scriptures, and especially in the prophetical parts, as well as in the Apocalypse, that is, the Revelation of St. John the Apostle, which the same Tichonius both understood with a lively apprehension, and expounded with truthfulness, and in a sufficiently Catholic sense, excepting only those places in which he endeavoured to defend the schism of his party, that is, the

Donatists. For here he laments the persecutions which they endured from the religious Emperor Valentinian, as heretics, when their churches, and followers, and houses, and possessions were given up into the hands of the Catholics, and their priests were driven into exile; and he calls these things martyrdoms, and boasts that they were foretold in the same Apocalypse. Now we have followed on our part the sense of this author in the present work, but in so doing we have omitted some things beyond the purpose which he inserted, in order that we may be more compendious; and we have taken care to add many more, which to him, as a man of genius, and who flourished, as was said of him, like an open rose among thorns, appeared plain and unworthy of investigation; and this we have done, so far as we have been able to attain, either by the tradition of masters, or the recollection of reading, or even our own capacity; for this, too, is among the commandments which we have received, to return to the Lord with usury the talents which have been committed to us. Now, although it had seemed fit that the aforesaid work should be divided into three short books <a> to relieve the mind; for in some way or other, as the blessed Augustine says: “The attention of the reader is refreshed by the termination of a book, as the toil of the traveller by resting at an inn” (Contr. adv. leg. et. proph., Bk. I. Ch. 33); nevertheless, that it might be rendered more easy for those who search to find, it was thought good that the continuous order of paragraphs should be preserved through out, which I had previously noted in the book itself by prefixing marks. For, as I think that the indolence of our nation, I mean of the English, ought to be taken into account, — which too, not long since, that is, in the time of the blessed Pope Gregory, received the seed of faith, and has cultivated the same remissly enough, so far as reading is concerned, — I have arranged my plan, so as not only to elucidate the sense, but also to compress the sentences, inasmuch as brevity, if it is clear, is wont to be fixed in the memory more than prolix discussion.

I bid thee farewell in Christ, most beloved brother, and desire that thou mayest deign to be ever mindful of thy Beda.

THE LIFE OF ST. VEDAST, BISHOP OF ARRAS



Translated by J. A. Giles

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CHAPTER I.

HOW THE MAN OF GOD, ST. VEDASTUS, WAS INTRODUCED TO KING HLUTHWIC (CLOVIS THE GREAT).

WHEN Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, had come down from heaven into this world, through the Virgin's womb, to seek the sheep that were lost, and, having gloriously achieved the work of his providence and of our redemption, had returned back to the seat of his Father's glory, he left behind him many lights in the persons of evangelic teachers, to dispel the darkness of this world; that as the stars adorn the face of heaven, and all draw their brilliancy from the sun, so also his holy teachers might shine upon this world, deriving their light from the Sun of immortality, and illustrating with the brightness and holy name of Christ, those also who were wandering in the blindness of ignorance, that their hunger which they had felt, even from the beginning of the world, might be satisfied with the feast of eternal life. Of the number of these was the holy priest Vedast, an excellent preacher, in the time of brave king of the Franks, Clovis, who was led by God's grace into these parts for the salvation of many, that, by Divine Grace assisting him, he might turn back into the way of salvation, and that true freedom which is in Christ, a people deceived by the snares of the Devil, and the captive that was bound in the chains of sin. But that this might be done at a favourable time, according to the Apostle, who says,—“Behold, 116 now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation!” the Lord Jesus, who wishes for all men to be saved, provided a suitable reason for his servant, that so he might arrive here to preach the word of God. It happened that the above-named king, Clovis, was preparing to make war on the Alemanni, who at that time possessed a kingdom by themselves. He did not, however, find them unprepared, as he expected. For they had collected a strong body of men, and met the king on the banks of the Rhine, with a firm determination to protect their country, or perish in its defence. Both sides fought most valiantly, rushing on death; the one party for glory, the other for their freedom. The king, seeing the enemy fight thus bravely, and his own men almost cut off, began to despair of safety rather than to hope for victory. He had not been born again in Christ, but in this extremity had recourse to his assistance. His queen, Clotilda, had been baptized, and was a woman of great piety. He accordingly raised his eyes to heaven, and offered up this prayer:—“O God, of singular power and supreme majesty, whom Clotilda acknowledges and worships, grant to me this day victory over mine enemies. For from this day Thou shalt be my only God, the only power I worship. Grant me victory, and I owe to serve Thee for ever.”

CHAPTER II.

HOW THE KING, AFTER HIS VICTORY, WAS EAGER TO BE BAPTIZED, AND HOW HE TOOK ST. VEDAST TO TEACH HIM AND ADMINISTER TO HIM THE SACRAMENT OF THE FAITH.

OH the wonderful mercy of Almighty God! oh how unspeakable is his goodness! who thus listens to, and 117 never abandons, those who trust in Him. With what faith ought Christians to invoke his mercy, when a pagan king, by one single petition, obtained so great a victory! What ancient example is there of such Divine love, in that he recompensed the tears of one bitter moment by bestowing so great a triumph on his future servant? Unless it be the example of King Hezekiah, who in his tribulation, by one single prayer, not only saved his city by Divine aid from instant devastation, but also, that same night on which he had poured forth his prayers into the Divine ear, saw victory and freedom secured by the slaughter of one hundred and eighty-five thousand of the enemy. But this victory, which I have mentioned above, brought eternal salvation to the king and his people, and that St. Vedast, that shining light, might not be hidden under a bushel, but be placed upon a candlestick, and shine forth by precept and example in the house of God, to turn away as many as possible from the errors of idolatry and the darkness of ignorance, into the way of truth: when the enemy was subdued and peace re-established, by the addition of the Alemanni to his dominion, the king returned in triumph home; and that he might faithfully keep his promise to the giver of so great glory, he made haste to listen to the holy preaching of Christ's servants, and to be washed by the holy sacrament of baptism. He came to the town of Tullum, where he knew that St. Vedast, with praiseworthy piety, served the only God, and enjoyed the sweet fruits of a life of holy meditation. He took this holy man as his companion on a journey which he was making to an illustrious priest and servant of Christ, Saint Remedius, at Rheims, in order that his salutary doctrine might refresh him at the different stages of his journey, and so a firm foundation of Christian faith might be laid, that when prepared by a faith and a knowledge of virtue, he might be washed in the spiritual laver by so great a pontiff, who would thus confirm, by 118 every spiritual gift, the work which St. Vedast, with the grace of God preventing him, had by his evangelic teaching begun. Thus the one guided the eager king to the fountain of everlasting life, the other washed him on his arrival in the stream. Both the holy fathers were almost equal in piety: the one by teaching, the other by baptizing, presented the temporal king an acceptable offering to the King of Heaven. These are the two olives; these the two shining lights, by which the aforesaid king was instructed in the way of the Lord, and snatched by God's mercy from the snares of the Devil, entered the gate of eternal life together with his brave subjects the Franks, and

adopted the faith of Christ. The nation was thus made holy, a peculiar people, that in them might be displayed the virtues of him, who called them out of darkness into marvellous light.

CHAPTER III.

HOW THE MAN OF GOD, VEDAST, RESTORED SIGHT TO A BLIND MAN, IN THE PRESENCE OF THE KING AND PEOPLE.

THE Holy Gospel informs us that the Lord Jesus, on his way to Jericho, to confirm the hearts of those who were with him in their belief of his majesty, restored sight to a blind man, who called to him: so that by opening the eyes of one that was blind, the hearts of many might be spiritually enlightened. Thus St. Vedast also restored sight, with Christ's assistance, to a certain blind man; and by this miracle confirmed the faith of the king which by his preaching he had planted in his heart, so that the king himself perceived that the illumination of the mind was as necessary to him as that of the eye to the blind man, and that the same effect which Divine Grace had produced by the prayer of his servant in the darkened eye of the body, was brought about by the same Divine power through the teaching of his same servant, and by the infusion of spiritual light into his own heart. For the king's excellency being on a journey with a worthy company of attendants, and a large multitude of people, came to a certain village, called in the language of the natives Wungesipagus, near the town of Reguliaca, which is situated on the flowery banks of the river Axna; and behold, as the king and people were crossing this river, a certain blind man met them, who for a long time had never seen the light of the sun.

His blindness possibly was for no fault of his, but that the works of God might be manifested in him, and that by the illumination of his eyes the hearts of many might be enlightened by the spirit. This man, hearing from those who were passing that way, that Christ's servant, St. Vedast, was travelling in the same company, cried out, "Holy Vedast, beloved by God, have mercy upon me, and earnestly entreat the Divine power to assist my forlorn condition. I ask not gold nor silver, but that my eyes may be enlightened by your prayers." The man of God immediately became sensible of divine power communicated to him, not only for the sake of the blind man, but of all the people who were present. He forthwith began to pray, and trusting in the Divine love, made with his right hand the sign of the cross over the eyes of the blind man, saying, "Lord Jesus, who art the true light, and didst open the eyes of the blind man when he called unto thee, open the eyes of this man also, that this people may understand that thou art the only God who doest miracles in heaven and on earth." Straightway the blind man received his sight, and went on his road rejoicing. In memory of this miracle a church has since been founded by pious men on the spot, in which faithful worshippers to this day derive benefit from Divine miracles.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW KING CLOVIS WAS BAPTIZED IN THE CITY OF RHEIMS, AND THEN COMMENDED THE MAN OF GOD VEDAST TO THE PONTIFF REMEDIUS.

NOW the king, having been fully instructed by the man of God in the doctrines of the Gospel, and confirmed in his faith by this miracle, sped on his way, nothing doubting, and with zeal equalling the rapidity of his travel, St.

Remedius, Abp.
of Rheims

A.D. 499. made haste to see the pious Archbishop Remedius, that, with the Holy Spirit working by his agency, he might be washed in the living fountain of Catholic baptism to the remission of his sins and the hope of everlasting life. With whom having remained a few days, to satisfy the requirements of the church, and according to the apostolic precept to wash himself beforehand in the tears of repentance, as St. Paul, the chief of the Apostles, says, “Be repentant, and let each of you be baptized in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;” and that after this he might receive the mystery of baptism in the name of the Holy Trinity. But the holy pontiff knowing how St. Paul says, “Let all your deeds be done in good order, appointed a day on which the king should enter the church, and receive the sacrament of Divine Love. What joy was there among God’s saints, what triumph in the church of God, when they saw that the king of Nineveh, at the preaching of Jonah, had descended from his throne and sat in the ashes of repentance, and humbled the head of his majesty under the pious hand of God’s priest. The king, therefore, was baptized, together with his nobles and people, who, by Divine grace preventing them, rejoiced to receive the sacrament of the holy laver. With both his objects gained, namely, the conquest of his enemies and the fulfilment of his own salvatory vow, he returned to sway the sceptre of his kingdom, and commended 121 St. Vedast to the holy Archbishop Remedius. Here he stayed, and acquired renown by the merits of his life and the example of virtue which he set. He was amiable and respected by all, for the religious dignity of his manners, his singular charity, his delightful brotherly love, the distinguished humility of his piety, his constant watchfulness in prayer, his modesty of language, his chastity of body, his sobriety in fasting, and the kind way in which he comforted the wretched. He never thought of the morrow, but trusting continually in the bounty of God, fed all who came to him with the bread of eternal life. He despised no one in narrow circumstances, but refreshed the sorrowful with the words of pious consolation; he injured no one, not even by a word; but deemed it sufficient to benefit all with brotherly love; wherefore, also, he was much frequented by many illustrious men, that

by his most holy discourse they might receive consolation for any sorrows that afflicted them, or hear from him the pure truths of religion according to the practice of the church. Wherefore, also, many were rescued by his devout piety from the snares of the Devil, and with the aid of divine love entered on the road that leads to everlasting life.

CHAPTER V.

OF THE CONVERSATION OF THE MAN OF GOD AT RHEIMS, AND OF THE MIRACLE WHICH HE WROUGHT THERE.

INDEED, many men, as we have said above, both nobles and commoners, came to see the man of God, to be comforted by the grace which abounded on his lips; and because from the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, and because he loved all with brotherly love, he showed himself affable to all, thinking the salvation of others to be his own gain. Nor did he bury in the 122 ground of sloth the talent of the Lord's money, but in the zeal of daily charity sought to increase it, that when his Lord came, he might not appear empty in his sight. Now a certain religious nobleman came among others to see the man of God, that he might be refreshed by him with the honey of heavenly doctrine. Whilst his sweet conversation was protracted to a great length, and the sun, passing beyond the midst of heaven, doubled the increasing shadows, the man of God, not wishing to dismiss his guest without something to strengthen him on his journey, told his boy, if any wine remained, to bring it to his dear friend, that he might return home refreshed in mind and strengthened in body. But from the great number of his visitors, the cask in which the wine was kept was dry, though the holy father's charity was not: the boy, in a sorrowful accent, whispered this into the holy father's ear, who blushed for shame, but with heart abounding in charity, and trusting on the Divine concurrence, he uttered a secret prayer to God, doubting nothing that he would be heard, or that he would have his petition granted; relying entirely on the mercy of him who brought a living fountain out of the dry rock for his thirsty people, and who in Cana of Galilee turned the water into most marvellous wine. He said to the boy, "Go, confiding in the goodness of God; and bring us quickly whatever you find in the vessel." Miraculous supply of wine. The boy ran quickly, in obedience to the holy father's orders, and found the vessel running over with most excellent wine. Giving thanks to God, he drank the health of his companions and of the friend that was come to him, who returned home strengthened by this twofold hospitality. But this holy servant of Christ, that he might not be accused of boasting, or be talked of in public among the people, solemnly enjoined the lad not to speak of this miracle all the days of his life, desiring more to be known of God than of men: knowing of a certainty that humility is the guardian of all the virtues, and ascends 123 to the kingdom of Heaven on the steps of charity, for truth itself has told us that "every one who humbles himself shall be exalted."

CHAPTER VI.

HOW THE HOLY MAN WAS ORDAINED BY SAINT REMEDIUS, AND SENT TO THE CITY OF THE ATREBATES TO PREACH THE WORD OF GOD; AND HOW HE HEALED A BLIND AND LAME MAN AT THE ENTRANCE OF THE CITY.

WHILST the man of God was thus becoming known by fame, and the abundance of his charity, his religious life and zeal in preaching the word of God, were talked of by all, the holy Archbishop Remedius thought it better to place this shining light of Christ on a candlestick, that it might cast further the brightness of its holiness to the salvation of many, than that it should be concealed and almost buried in the obscurity of one single spot. Under Divine Providence, and with the good advice of his priests, he ordained him bishop, and sent him to the city of Atrebata to preach the word of life, that a people who had long lain in the old errors of evil habits, might, by the aid of God working through the constant zeal of his holy preaching, be led by him to the way of truth, and the recognition of the Son of God. Having undertaken this episcopal dignity and office of preaching, he speedily set out towards the above-named city; but as an omen of his future prosperity and success, God signalized his entrance into the town by a miracle. At the gate of the city he was met by two poor infirm men, one of whom was blind and the other lame, who in a pitiable tone asked alms of the man of God. Christ's holy priest pitied their misery, and considering what he might bestow upon them, could not but know that an apostolic preacher had no gold or silver to give them; 124 wherefore, trusting in the divine clemency, and strengthened by the example of the Holy Apostles Peter and John, he said: "Silver and gold I have not; but what I have, that is, charity and prayer to God, this I give you forthwith;" at saying which words, the man of God, from the affection of his heart, shed tears at their distress, and offered up the prayer of faith for Divine assistance, either for their corporal benefit, or for the spiritual welfare of those who were present. Such pious and benevolent prayers could not fail of their effect: but, by the power of him who said, through Esaias the prophet, "I heard thee at the favourable time, and in the day of salvation helped thee," both were restored, according to their prayers, in the presence of the people. The one received light into his eyes, the other rejoiced in recovered nimbleness of foot; and both returned home, giving thanks to Divine Grace, from whom they had received greater mercies than they had expected. This miracle, also, was the means of eternal salvation to many, who, seeing the heavenly virtue which followed the words of the man of God, left the abomination of idolatry, and believing in Christ, were washed in the living water of holy baptism.

CHAPTER VII.

HOW HE EXPLORED EVERY PART OF THE CITY, AND WITH DIFFICULTY FOUND THE VESTIGES OF AN ANCIENT CHURCH AMONG THE RUINS WHICH WERE BECOME DENS FOR WILD BEASTS.

BY this miracle the man of God acquired great credit and support among the people; and he now explored the whole city, to see if there were any vestiges of an ancient church to be found. For he knew that in former times the place had professed the faith of Christ, but for the 125 sins of its inhabitants, the secret, though righteous judgment of God had given it over for devastation with the other cities of Gaul or Germany, to that perfidious pagan, Attila, king of the Huns, who, out of the exceeding fierceness of his soul, had shown neither honour to God's priests, nor reverence to his churches; but, like a devouring pestilence, laid waste every thing with fire and sword. Then it was, as in the destruction of Jerusalem by the impious king of Babylon, that the nations came into the inheritance of the Lord, and with polluted hands defiled the temples of Christ, shedding the blood of his servants before the altars of the Most Highest. It was not the bravery of the pagans, but the sins of Christ's people that did this. At length Christ's servant found the ruins of an old church among the fragments of walls, surrounded by briars and thicket; where once were companies of singers, but now were the dens and lurking places of wild beasts, full of their filth and all uncleanness, so that scarcely a vestige of the walls remained. At this sight he groaned from his inmost soul, saying, "O Lord, these things have come upon us, because we have sinned with our fathers, have acted unjustly and done iniquity; but Thou, Lord, be mindful of Thy mercy, spare our offences, and do not forget Thy poor people for ever." As he uttered these words in tears, a bear suddenly sprang out of the ruinous den, to which the man of God, in anger, gave command that it should retire into the desert, and never again cross the banks of the river. Terrified at this admonition, the animal fled, and never again was seen in those parts. O for the wonderful power of Almighty God, in his holy saints, to whom the fiercest beasts show obedience! O for the wonderful boldness of mankind, who do not fear to despise the words of wholesome instruction delivered by his holy teachers! The irrational beast in a way uses human reason, by showing obedience to the commands of his saints; but man, formed after the likeness of God, and endued with reason, is compared with the foolish beasts, and being made like unto them, understands not his own honour.

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW AT A BANQUET GIVEN BY CLOTHAIRE, THE MAN OF GOD, BY THE SIGN OF THE CROSS, FOILED THE MACHINATIONS OF THE DEVIL.

WHEN the man of God had found this ruined church, he took upon himself two labours of love; first, by his paternal care to bring to the knowledge of the light the people tainted with the errors of idolatry, and blinded with the darkness of ignorance; and secondly, to restore the church to its former honour. He appointed priests and deacons to assist him in the churches; and where there had lately been nothing but the caves of robbers, He builds churches. he now built houses of prayer, and he strove to adorn them rather with the praises of the Lord than with secular pomp and riches. But he was bountiful to the poor, and affable to the rich, that either by his gifts or kind words he might lead all into the way of truth. Knowing, therefore, that the proud of this world will with difficulty bend their necks to the humility of Christ's religion, unless by admonitions of the sweetest love, he fortified himself by the example of the Apostle, and became all things to all men, that he might gain all. He showed honour to the old, and gave paternal admonitions to the young; continually, in his labours of charity, seeking not his own, but that which is God's; and, in imitation of Christ himself, he despised not the banquets of the powerful; not for luxury's sake, but under the plea of preaching, that by familiarity and concord, he might the more easily pour the word of God into the hearts of his fellow guests. Wherefore a certain 127 powerful nobleman of the Franks, Hocinus by name, invited Clothaire, Clothaire, son of

Clovis. son of King Clovis, who at that time was the able king of the Franks, to an entertainment which he had prepared at his own house for the king and his nobles. Saint Vedast was invited to the feast, who, on entering, stretched out his right hand, as was his custom, and marked every thing with the sign of the cross. It happened that there were standing there some vessels full of beer, which, according to a heathen error, had been polluted with diabolical charms. These cracked and fell to pieces by the superior power of the cross of Christ, and the liquor which they contained was poured out upon the ground. The king and his nobles, in turn, asked the bishop what was the meaning of the miracle. The holy man answered, "By certain wicked charms practised to deceive the souls of the guests, the power of the Devil was concealed in this liquor: but the virtues of the cross of Christ have expelled it, and in its departure the liquor has been spilled upon the ground, as you see." For many were set free from the trammels of the Devil's secret agency, and abandoning foolish auguries and charms, took refuge in the purity of the true religion;

seeing that the Divine power worked miracles through his servant, and that the machinations of the old serpent availed nothing against his holiness, and that what he had prepared for the destruction of a few, Christ's grace had turned to the salvation of many.

CHAPTER IX.

OF THE SICKNESS, DEATH, AND BURIAL OF THE HOLY MAN, AND HOW THE HOUSE IN WHICH HE DIED ESCAPED UNTOUCHED BY A FIRE.

THIS holy priest had now, by Divine Grace, ruled the church with great devoutness in preaching the Gospel 128 and with zealous piety about forty years, and during this time had, by his catholic doctrines, turned a multitude of persons to the purity of the Christian faith. The knowledge of God's law spread every where; the holy name of Christ was heard in the mouths of all; charity of life was visible in their conduct, love of their heavenly country burnt in the breasts of all; on appointed days the whole people thronged to the church, and celebrated with great joy the proper feast-days of our Saviour; alms were distributed abundantly to the poor, from house to house; the word of God was every where preached daily, and at the canonical hours the clergy sung in the churches hymns of praise. "Blessed," said they, "are the people who have these things: blessed are the people who have the Lord for their God!" For all lay down to rest in the beauty of peace, all took pleasure in the knowledge of truth, and delighted in the holiness of Christ's religion. But when this holy preacher and priest, ripe in virtues as in years, was now thought fit to receive from the Lord the reward of his labours, he was taken with a violent fever in the city of Atrebatæ; the Divine mercy so regulating it that where he had laboured so zealously, he might from thence arrive at eternal felicity, and in the arms of his brethren render up his soul to his Creator. But God, in order to signalize the departure of his servant, The pillar of

light rests on

his house. caused a pillar of light to shine in the night from the top of the house in which the holy man was lying; and it seemed to remain there two hours, and to reach even up to heaven. When this was told to the man of God, he immediately saw that it portended his own death: and he called to him his sons, that by their prayers his soul might be commended to his Creator.

Having bestowed on them the sweet counsel of paternal love, and the last words of charity, he was strengthened by the holy viaticum of Christ's body and blood, and resigned his soul in the arms of his weeping brethren. O happy day for the holy priest! but most 129 sorrowful for all the people, thus suddenly abandoned by so great a spiritual pastor — abandoned only by his bodily presence, for his intercession in the spirit will never fail them, if they continue to follow his precepts, and the example of his holy life. The clergy and much people assembled together, to perform the last obsequies of the reverend man: there were also other officers of the church, priests and deacons: but, wonderful to say, amid the voice of the earthly singers, as some

pious men relate, a song was heard in heaven, and when they approached the bier on which the body was placed, and which was lying with all funeral honours in the midst of them, they found themselves unable to move it. Not knowing what to do, nor which way to turn, they asked the pious arch-priest Scopilio, who had been private secretary to the man of God, whether he remembered to have heard him give any instructions about his burial, being apprehensive that this might have happened because they intended to bury him within the walls of the city. Scopilio answered, that he had often heard him say no one ought to be buried in a town, which should be the abode of the living, not the resting-place of the dead. By his advice, therefore, they determined to bury him without the walls in the oratory which he had himself built; and immediately they lifted the bier with the greatest ease, and carried the holy body with lamps and hymns of praise to the place, where they buried him with great honours near the altar of the oratory. A noble treasure, in truth, was it which they here deposited in the ground! and miracles of Divine power are wrought there even to this day, such as those who have seen can tell better than the pen of the historian. In process of time, the house in which God's chosen servant died caught fire, and a certain holy woman, called Habita, saw Saint Vedast come and put out the fire. Thus the house escaped destruction, as did also the bed on which the man of God had died, that all men might see how exalted must be his happiness in heaven, inasmuch as even his house and bed were not suffered to be burnt on earth; and by his exceeding merit, with the assistance of Divine Love, Miracles. former miracles are daily related, and new ones performed. Blessed was the city of Atrebat, for such an excellent protector! Its mouldering walls are ennobled by his righteous deeds: all its people should rejoice in his holy intercession, and offer everlasting praise to Almighty God, who gave them so renowned a teacher, by whose preaching they have learnt the way of truth, and by whose prayers, if they continue in the firmness of the faith, and in holiness of life, they will remain safe from all adversity, and will arrive at the glory of eternal happiness through our Lord Jesus Christ, who reigns for ever and ever with the Father and the Holy Spirit, God, through ages of ages! — Amen!

CHAPTER X.

A HOMILY PREACHED TO THE PEOPLE ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF ST. VEDAST.

The homily. REJOICE, my beloved brethren in the Lord, who have come together at this festival in honour of our holy father and protector, St. Vedast; and be joyful in the spirit, and praise from the bottom of your hearts the clemency of Jesus Christ our Lord, who, by the preaching of this holy priest hath deigned to bring us out of the errors of idolatry to a knowledge of His name: let us, then, with one consent follow the steps of so holy a teacher; let us not be degenerate sons of so great a father, but by noble conduct imitate the sanctity of his life. Let us, therefore, cast from us the works of darkness, and put upon us the armour of life, so that we may walk virtuously in the day: because the night of ignorance hath departed and the light of true science hath shone upon us, that we may be sons of light, and walk in all purity and 131 righteousness. The homily. Let no seeds of wickedness or malice be hidden in any of our hearts: for man sees the face, but God examines into the heart, nor can any thing be concealed from the eyes of His Omnipotence. Let us make ready ourselves in all goodness, that Vedast, our illustrious bishop and pious preacher, may rejoice to lead us on the last day before the tribunal of our Great Judge, so that, by the number of his children, his glory may be amplified, and we may earn the privilege of hearing that gracious sentence pronounced, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, enjoy the kingdom which hath been prepared for you from the beginning of the world!" He does not cease to help us daily in our earthly conflict by his pious prayers uttered from his heavenly country, desiring that we, his dearest children, begotten in Christ by his fatherly piety, may arrive at the glory of everlasting happiness. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every one of you in order, according to the measure of his strength, bravely resist the promptings of the Devil, that he may become worthy the crown of victory which shall never fade, in company with our pious father. "For the affections of this world," saith the apostle, "are not worthy to be compared to the future glory, which shall be revealed in us." The Divine Love, therefore, hath willed that the time of our labour should be brief and the reward of it lasting, and that for tribulation which shall last but for a time, we shall rejoice in the recompense of glory everlasting. Now, we have heard, when the life of God's beloved priest was read, what devotion he displayed in every excellence, how he chastened his body by rigorous abstinence, and strove to perform offices of charity to all men. Let us go on with all alacrity of mind, and with all our strength of body, following the traces of his holy life, that we may merit to be made partakers of the happiness in which he reigns with Christ. Let no carnal concupiscence or secular ambition impede our course: let us, by deeds of 132 piety, The homily.

accelerate our course to the gates of the heavenly country, where the inhabitants of the eternal city are waiting for us, and the King himself, who wishes all men to be safe, is anxiously looking for our salvation with his holy saints. It is our duty to co-operate with Him in the work of our salvation; for He hath loved us to such a degree that he did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all. Let us love Him because He first loved us; let us do His will, because His will is our happiness: let us always keep in mind what was said by the Source of all Truth to a certain rich man in the Gospel: "If you wish to enter into life, keep the commandments:" what are the commandments, save to fear God and to love our neighbour? "On these two commands hang all the law and the prophets!" Now, the love of our neighbour is proved in works of compassion. Whosoever hath the riches of this world, let him help the man who hath not. Whosoever possesseth the knowledge of learning, let him correct him who errs, as the Apostle James saith, "Whoso turneth one sinner from the error of his ways, covereth a multitude of his own sins." It behoveth us to know, dearest brethren, that, in proportion to the number of souls any man has gained to God, so will be the reward which he shall receive from God. What exalted glory do you not imagine St. Vedast must have in the heavenly kingdom with Christ, who gained by his zealous preaching such an innumerable people to Christ on earth! Or, how great glory do you then trust that man's soul must have among the angels, whose body hath so much honour among mankind! What cannot his pious prayers obtain in heaven, when on earth he performed such great miracles? But the zeal of his Gospel-preaching and the fervour of the love which glowed in his bosom, were greater than any miracles. See how manfully he sought to multiply the talents which he received from the Lord! Therefore shall he hear the Lord pronounce over him that happy 133 judgment, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, The homily. for thou hast been faithful over a few things: I will make thee ruler over many things. Enter thou into the joy of the Lord thy God." Small are the goods of this present life, in comparison of the goods which are to come; but whosoever labours faithfully in the former, shall rest happily in the latter. This holy saint, whom you have come together to honour, laboured for the salvation of many; wherefore on the day of judgment he shall receive the rewards of many. He chastened himself by rigorous abstinence, and benefited others by sedulous preaching; wherefore he is worthy to be praised by all men, according to the saying of Solomon, the wisest of men, "The memory of the just man shall be accompanied with praises, but the name of the wicked rotteth: whilst the life of the just shall be praised, the iniquity of the wicked, like dung, is detested by all men." What greater happiness can there be than by a good life and conversation to earn from God the glory of eternal happiness, and to be praised by the mouths of all men? Let us consider daily with what assurance we can come before the tribunal of the Chief Judge, what good works we can carry with us; His justice will be no acceptor of persons; but will render to every one according to his works: and he who

labours the most in the works of the Lord, shall receive the most in the kingdom of God. Let each of us, in whatever vocation he is placed, strive therein to work out his own salvation. The door of the heavenly kingdom is open to all; but the quality of men's merits will admit one man and reject another. How wretched must it be for a man to be shut from the glory of the saints, and to be consigned with the Devil to eternal flames! The burden of its sins sinks the soul into Tartarus; but the overflowing of God's justice exalts it to heavenly glory. Let us throng frequently to the church of Christ: let us diligently hear therein the word of God; and what we receive in 134 the ear let us retain in our hearts, The homily. that we may bear the fruit of good works in patience, and with brotherly love may each study to assist the other. We have abundant bright examples of our Heavenly Father in every office of charity, in the fervour of faith, in the long-suffering of hope, and in the persevering in goodness displayed by the holy man, whom we so much honour and so much love. Let us, in all our conversation, follow his holy footsteps with all the energy of our minds; that, walking in the way of his life, we may be thought worthy with him to receive the glory of eternal happiness, through the aid of our everlasting King and Lord Jesus Christ, who liveth and reigneth with the Father and the Holy Spirit, God, world without end. Amen.

AN EPISTLE FROM BEDE TO ABBOT ALBINUS, RELATING TO HIS ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY



Translated by J. A. Giles

*Bede, the Servant of Christ, to the most Beloved and Reverend Father
Albinus, Health!*

I HAVE thankfully received the testimonies of your love which you have condescended to send me by the hands of our venerable brother Nothelm the priest, and especially your letter, in which you have shown so much solicitude, this second time, to give me aid and information for my Ecclesiastical History, a work which I first undertook at your instigation. Wherefore also I have with great propriety sent it to you, as I was able to finish it, to be copied.* But I intend to repay you by forwarding to you another volume for the same purpose, as I find, also, is consistent with your own wishes, namely, that which I have lately published on the building of Solomon's temple, and its allegorical signification. And I humbly beseech you, most loving father, and Christ's servants who are with you, to intercede fervently with the righteous in behalf of my frailty; and to admonish those, to whom you shall show my work, to do the same. Fare you well, my good and ever loving father in Christ.

AN EPISTLE TO BISHOP EGBERT, CONCERNING ECCLESIASTICAL DISCIPLINE



Translated by J. A. Giles

*Bede, the Servant of Christ, to the most Beloved the Right Reverend Bishop
Egbert, Health!*

§ 1. I REMEMBER hearing you say last year, when I spent a few days in your monastery for purposes of study, that you would wish, this year also, when you should arrive at the same place, to have me near you to converse with, for the same purposes of study, common to us both. If this wish could, by God's favour, be accomplished, there would be no need of my communicating with you at present by letter, since I could then more freely in private conversation say to you, face to face, whatever I wished or deemed expedient. But since the state of my health has, as you know, become such as to prevent this from coming to pass, I have yet, with brotherly devotion, in return for your affection, sent you by letter what I was not able to communicate in person. And I pray you by the Lord, not to consider the point of this letter to be fraught with arrogance and vanity, but as the true submission of humility and pious affection.

§ 2. I therefore exhort your Holiness, my beloved Bishop in Christ, to confirm both by holy life and by holy teaching, the sacred dignity which God, the Author of dignities and Giver of spiritual gifts, hath bestowed upon you. For neither of these is complete without the other: if the bishop whose life is pure, omits the duty of teaching, or the good teacher neglects to practise what is right. But he who faithfully does both, is that servant who shall with joy await the coming of the Lord, hoping soon to hear "Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of the Lord." But if any one, which God forbid, shall receive the rank of bishop, and shall take no pains, either by a righteous life, to save himself from evil, or his people by punishing and admonishing them; what shall happen to him when the Lord comes at an hour that he knew not of, is declared plainly in that Gospel sentence, addressed to the unprofitable servant, "Cast him into outer darkness: where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

§ 3. In particular, I advise your fatherly sanctity to abstain in your pontifical dignity from idle confabulations, and revilings, and other pollutions of the unrestrained tongue; and to occupy your tongue and mind in divine preachings and meditations on Scripture, and particularly in reading the

epistles of the Apostle St. Paul to Timothy and Titus, and in the words of the blessed Pope Gregory, wherein he hath spoken much and curiously of the life and the faults of rulers, in his book of the Pastoral Rule, and in his homilies on the Gospel, that your language should always be seasoned with the salt of wisdom, elevated above the common diction, and more worthy of the Divine ear. For, as it is unbecoming that the holy vessels of the altar should ever be profaned by vulgar use and vile services, so is it in every respect untoward and lamentable, that he who is ordained to consecrate the Lord's sacraments upon the altar, should at one moment stand ministering to the Lord at such ceremonies, and then, leaving the church, with the same mouth and the same hands, with which he had before been handling sacred things, should suddenly talk of trifles or do what will give the Lord offence.

§ 4. Purity of tongue, as well as of conduct, is best preserved, not only by sacred reading, but also by intercourse with those who are devout servants of our Lord; so that if my tongue begins to run wild, or evil deeds suggest themselves to me, I may be sustained by the hands of my faithful brethren and preserved from falling. If this be expedient to all God's children, how much more so to men of that rank, who have not only the care of their own salvation, but also that of the church committed to their charge? as we find it written, 2 Cor. xi. 28. "besides those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. Who is made weak, and I am not made weak? Who is scandalized and I burn not?" I do not say this from any suspicion that you act otherwise; but because it is noised abroad concerning some bishops, that they have no men of religion or continence near them; but rather such as indulge in laughter and jests, revellings, and drunkenness and other temptations of an idle life, and who rather feed their bodies with carnal food than their minds on the heavenly sacrifice. Such, if you should meet with any, I would wish you to correct by your holy authority, and advise them to have such witnesses of their conversation, both by night and day, as may suffice to benefit the people, by actions worthy of the Lord, and by suitable exhortations, and so further the spiritual labours of the bishops themselves. For read the Acts of the Apostles, and you will see by the narrative of Saint Luke, what companions Paul and Barnabas had with them, and what works they themselves wrought, wherever they went. For as soon as they entered a city or a synagogue, they sought to preach the word of God, and to disseminate it on every side. This, I would wish you also, beloved friend, to make your aim; for to this duty you were elected, to this you were consecrated, that with great virtues you should preach the Gospel, by the aid of him who is the Prince of all virtue, Jesus Christ our Lord. You will accomplish this, if, wherever you arrive, you gather together the inhabitants, lay before them the words of exhortation, and in the character of leader of the celestial warfare, set an example of life together with all who may have come with you.

§ 5. And because your diocese is too extensive, for you alone to go through

it, and preach the word of God in every village and hamlet, even if you give a whole year to it; it is necessary that you appoint others to assist you in the holy work, by ordaining priests and nominating teachers who may be zealous in preaching the word of God in every village, and celebrating the holy mysteries, and especially by performing the sacred rites of baptism wherever opportunity may offer. And in setting forth such preaching to the people, I consider it above every other thing important, that you should endeavour to implant deeply in the memory of all men the Catholic faith which is contained in the Apostles' Creed, and the Lords Prayer as it is taught us in the Holy Gospel. And, indeed, there is no doubt that those who have studied the Latin language will be found to know these well; but the vulgar, that is, those who know only their own language, must be made to say them and repeat them over and over again in their own tongue. This must be done not only in the case of laymen, who are still in the life of the world, but with the clergy or monks, who are without a knowledge of the Latin tongue. For thus every congregation of the faithful will learn in what manner they ought to show their faith, and with what steadfastness of belief they should arm and fortify themselves against the assaults of unclean spirits: and thus every choir of those who pray to God will learn what they ought especially to ask for from the Divine Mercy. Wherefore, also, I have myself often given English translations of both of these, namely, the Creed and the Lord's Prayer, to uneducated priests. For the holy prelate, Ambrose, also, speaking of faith, gives this admonition, that all the faithful should repeat the words of the Creed every morning early, and so fortify themselves as by a spiritual antidote against the poison, which the malignant cunning of the Devil may either by night or by day cast out against them. But that the Lord's Prayer should be very frequently repeated, as even we have learnt by the habit of earnest deprecation and bending of knees.

§ 6. If your pastoral authority can accomplish these our suggestions in ruling and feeding Christ's sheep, who shall declare what a heavenly reward you will prepare for yourself before Him who is the Shepherd of shepherds? The fewer examples you find of this holy work among the bishops of our nation, the higher will be your reward for your individual merit, inasmuch as you will by this paternal care and affection stir up and excite God's people through the frequent repetition of the Creed, or holy prayer, to seek after intelligence, love, hope, and all those same heavenly gifts which are enumerated in their prayers. As, too, on the contrary, if you negligently discharge the duty committed to you by the Lord, you will take part hereafter with the wicked and idle servant for thus withholding your talent; especially if you have presumed to ask and receive from such temporal gifts, on whom you have not thought fit to bestow heavenly gifts in recompense. For when the Lord sent his disciples to preach the Gospel, and said to them, "And as ye go, preach, saying: The kingdom of heaven is at hand," he added, a little farther on, "Freely ye have received, freely give; provide neither gold nor silver." If,

therefore, he ordered them to preach the Gospel freely, and did not permit them to receive gold or silver, or any temporal payment of money from those to whom they preached, what hazard, I would ask, must hang over those who do the contrary?

§ 7. Consider what a heavy crime is committed by those who diligently seek earthly lucre from their hearers, and take no pains for their everlasting salvation, by preaching, exhorting, or rebuking them. Weigh this most anxiously and with the most careful attention, most beloved Prelate. For we have heard it reported, that there are many country-houses and hamlets of our nation situated on inaccessible mountains and thick forests, where, for many years, no bishop comes to perform any of the duties of the holy ministry or Divine grace, yet none of these is free from paying tribute to the bishop; and yet not only is there no bishop among them to confirm by the laying on of hands those who have been baptized, but they have not even any teacher to instruct them in the truth of the faith, and in the difference between good and evil. Thus some of our bishops not only do not freely preach the Gospel and confirm those who have been baptized, but do what is worse; for they receive money from their hearers contrary to God's commands, and neglect the ministry of the word, which God ordained them to preach: whereas God's beloved high priest, Samuel, is recorded to have acted very differently, in the judgment of all the people. "Therefore," says he, "I have dwelt before you from my youth even to this day; behold, here I am; say of me before God, and before his Christ, whether I have taken any one's ox or ass; whether I have falsely accused any one, or oppressed any one, or taken a gift from the hand of any one; and I will hold it for nought this day, and will restore it to you. And they said, Thou has not accused us falsely; neither hast thou oppressed us, nor taken any thing from the hand of any man." In reward for his innocence and justice he was numbered among the leaders and priests of God's people, and in his prayers was heard by God and admitted to converse with him; as the Psalmist says, "Moses and Aaron among his priests and Samuel among them that call upon his name; they called upon the Lord and he answered them. He spake unto them in the cloudy pillar."

§ 8. But, if we believe, and confess, that any good is wrought on the faithful by the laying on of hands, whereby they receive the Holy Spirit; it follows, on the contrary, that those who have not the laying on of hands, must be deprived of this benefit. On whom, then, does this privation reflect, if not on the bishops who promise they will be their guardians, but either from neglect or inability perform none of the spiritual duties of a guardian? 1 Cor. vi. 10. Covetousness and nothing else, is the cause of this conduct. Against which the apostle (in whom Christ spake) argues, when he says, "The love of money is the root of all evil;" and again, "Neither shall the covetous inherit the kingdom of God." For when a bishop, for the love of money, has nominally taken under his guardianship a larger portion of the people than he can by any means visit and preach to the whole year round, it is plain that he

is only gathering danger and destruction for himself, as well as those whose false guardian he is.

§ 9. Thus far, most beloved Bishop, have I briefly alluded to the calamity under which our country is suffering most severely, and I earnestly beseech you to strive to rectify what you see done amiss. For I believe you have a ready assistant in so good a labour in King Ceolwulph, who, by his own zeal for religion, will endeavour firmly to lend his aid in whatever relates to the rule of piety, and most especially will exert himself to promote and bring to completion the good works which you, his dearest relation, shall undertake; wherefore I would prudently advise him, that he should in your time make the ecclesiastical establishment of our nation more complete than it has hitherto been. This cannot be better done, in my opinion, than by consecrating more bishops, and following the example of the lawgiver, who, when he found himself unable alone to bear the strife and burden of the whole Israelitish people, moved by Divine inspiration, appointed and consecrated seventy Elders, whose aid and counsel might aid him in discharging his heavy duties. Who is there that does not see how much better it would be to divide the weighty load of ecclesiastical rule among several, who can the more easily bear each his portion, than for the whole weight to be laid on one, — a burden greater than he can bear! For the holy Pope Gregory, in his letters to the blessed Archbishop Augustine concerning the faith of our nation, which was still future and required their exertions to sustain it, ordered him to ordain twelve bishops therein, as soon as they should have embraced the faith, and that the Bishop of York should receive the pallium from the Apostolic See, and become their metropolitan. Wherefore, holy Father, I would wish that you should, under the holy guidance of the above-named king, whom God loveth, endeavour, to the best of your judgment, to make this number of bishops complete, in order that the number of ministers may abound, and the church of Christ be the more fully instructed in those things which pertain to the duties of our holy religion. And, indeed, we know that, by the negligence and foolish donations of preceding kings, it is not easy to find a vacant place where a new episcopal see may be erected.

§ 10. I should therefore consider it expedient, that a general council should be held, and the consent both of kings and bishops be obtained, that, by a proclamation, a place may be provided among the monasteries, where an episcopal see may be created. And, lest any abbot or monks may endeavour to contravene or oppose this decree, licence should be given them to choose some one from among themselves to be ordained bishop, and to rule with episcopal authority, over the adjoining country belonging to the same diocese, as well as the monastery itself: or, if no one can be found in that monastery fit to be ordained bishop, yet that it shall depend upon their examination, according to the canonical statutes, who shall be ordained bishop of that diocese. By following this suggestion, and with God's assistance, you will find no difficulty, I think, in fulfilling the appointment of the Apostolic See,

and the Bishop of the church of York will become the metropolitan. And, if it appear necessary that any addition of land or property should be made to such a monastery, that it may be the better able to undertake the episcopal duties, there are, as we know well, many places calling themselves monasteries, but exhibiting no sign whatever of a monastic system; some of which I should much like to see transferred by synodical authority, that their present luxury, vanity, and intemperance in meat and drink might be exchanged for chastity, temperance, and piety, and that they may so help to sustain the episcopal see, which is to be created.

§ 11. And, seeing that there are many such large establishments, which, as is commonly said, are of use neither to God nor man, because they neither observe regular monastic life, nor yet supply soldiers or attendants of the secular authorities to defend our shores from barbarians; if any one were, according to the necessities of the times, to erect an episcopal see in such places, he may be shown to incur no blame of prevarication, but rather to be doing an act of virtue. For how can it be accounted a misdeed, that the unjust decrees of former kings should be set right by the correct judgment of princes better than they? or that the lying pen of unrighteous scribes should be destroyed and nullified by the discreet sentence of wiser priests, according to the example of ancient history, which, in describing the times of the kings of Judah, from David and Solomon to Hezekiah, the last of them, shows that some of them were religious, but the greater number reprobate; and that at one time the wicked censured the deeds of the good who went before them, but at another time the good, with the aid of God's holy spirit, zealously corrected the hurtful deeds of their wicked predecessors, as was their bounden duty, by means of the holy priests and prophets; according to that saying of the holy Prophet Esaias, "To loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free." By which example it behoves your Holiness also, in conjunction with our religious king, to cancel the irreligious and unrighteous deeds and writings of those who lived formerly, and to fix your eye on such things as may benefit this province, either according to God, or according to the flesh; lest, in these our times, either religion cease altogether, (together with the love and fear of Him who seeth into the heart,) or the number of our secular soldiers become lessened, and our borders be no longer defended from the inroads of the barbarians. For, disgraceful though it be to say it, so many estates have been received under the name of monasteries by those who know nothing whatever of the monastic life, as you yourselves know better than I, that the sons of the nobles, or of discharged soldiers, can find no place wherein to receive their possessions; and thus, having nothing to do, and not marrying, though past the age of puberty, they are held by no tie of continence; and therefore either go beyond the sea and abandon their country, which they ought to fight for; or, with still greater wickedness and impudence, not being bound to chastity, become addicted to luxury and fornication, and do not abstain even from the very virgins who are

dedicated to God.

§ 12. But others, who are laymen, and have no experience of the regular monastic life, nor any love for the same, commit a still greater scandal: — for they give money to the kings, and under pretence of erecting monasteries they acquire possessions, wherein the more freely to indulge their licentiousness; and procuring these by a royal edict to be assigned over to them in inheritance, they get the deed by which these privileges are confirmed, as if it were a matter worthy of God's notice, authenticated by the signatures of the bishops, abbots, and secular authorities. And thus, having gained possession of farms and villages, they free themselves from every bond, both human and Divine, and in the character of superiors over monks, though they are but laymen, they do nothing therein but gratify their desires. Nay, it is not monks that are there assembled, but all such as they can pick up, outcasts from other monasteries for disobedience, or men whom they can allure away from other monasteries, or, in short, such of their own followers as they can persuade to receive the tonsure, and promise monastic obedience to themselves. With such ill-sorted societies do they fill the cells which they have built, whilst they present a disgraceful spectacle, never before heard of: for at one time they are occupied with their wives and the care of raising children, and at another time they rise from their beds to occupy themselves with the internal concerns of the monastery. Furthermore they display the same folly in procuring land for their wives, as they say, to erect convents, and these, equally foolish, though also laics, suffer themselves to become the superiors over Christ's handmaidens. Well suited to them is the proverb that wasps, though they can make combs, yet store them with poison instead of honey.

§ 13. Thus for about thirty years, ever since King Aldfrid was removed from this life, our province has been involved in such folly and error, that there has not been a single præfect since that time, who has not furnished himself during his præfecture with a monastery of this kind, and involved his wife also in the guilt of such wicked traffic; and thus this wicked custom has prevailed, and the king's ministers and servants have bestirred themselves to do the like. So that numbers of men have been found, who call themselves abbots and præfects, or ministers or servants of the king, who, although as laymen, they may have learnt a little of the monastic life, not by experience, but by hearsay, yet are utterly without share of that character and profession which is required to teach it; and, indeed, such men, as you know, on a sudden submit to the tonsure, and of their own judgment, from laymen, become not monks but abbots. But, inasmuch as they have no knowledge nor love of the above-named excellence, what can be more applicable to them than that malediction of the Gospel, "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch?" Such blindness might, in truth, some time or other, be put an end to and retrained by regular discipline, and expelled by pontifical and synodical authority beyond the limits of the Holy Church, if the pontiffs themselves were not found to aid and abet such crimes; for they not only do not take care

to annul such unrighteous decrees by righteous ones, but rather do all in their power to confirm them by their own subscriptions, as we have said before, prompted by the same love of money to confirm those wicked writings, as the purchasers themselves were to buy such monasteries. I could tell you much more about these and such like traitors to their own cause, by whom our province is grievously vexed, if I did not know that you are yourself well acquainted therewith. For in what I have written to you already, I have not supposed that I was informing you of a thing which you were before ignorant of, but I wished to advise you in a friendly manner, to correct with all diligence faults, of the existence of which you were already well informed.

§ 14. And now I pray and beseech you in the Lord, to protect the flock committed to you from the fury of assailing wolves; and remember that you are appointed to be their shepherd, not a hireling; to show forth your love of the Chief Shepherd, by the skilful feeding of his sheep; and to be ready with the blessed Prince of the Apostles, if occasion require, to lay down your life for the same. Beware, I entreat you, lest on the day of judgment that same Prince of Apostles, and the other leaders of faithful flocks, present to the Lord the fruits of their pastoral care, whilst among yours may be found a portion, that deserves to be placed on his left hand among the goats, and to depart with curses unto everlasting punishment; nay, even yourself may on that day deserve to be classed among those of whom Esaias said: "He shall be the least among a thousand, and a little one among a strong nation." For it is your duty most diligently to inquire into whatever right and wrong is done in all the monasteries of your district, that no abbot, who is ignorant of the rules or despises them, and also that no unworthy abbess, be placed over any society of Christ's servants or handmaidens. And on the other hand, that no contemptuous and undisciplined society of contumacious hearers spurn against the supervision of their spiritual masters; and this the more especially, since you say, that all inquiry into what is done within the walls of a monastery belongs to you, and not to the king, or any of the secular princes, save when any one in the monasteries is found to have offended against the princes themselves. It is your duty, I say, to provide, lest the Devil usurp the sovereignty in places dedicated to the Lord; lest discord take the place of peace, strife of piety, drunkenness of sobriety, and fornication and murder reign instead of charity and chastity; lest there be found among you some, of whom it may truly be said, "I saw the wicked buried, who, when they were alive, were in the holy place, and were praised in the city, as if of righteous deeds."

Cure of souls.

§ 15. But those also, who still live abroad in the world, demand a portion of your most anxious care, as we forewarned you in the beginning of this epistle; you should furnish them with competent teachers of the word of everlasting life, and among other things instruct them by what works they may render themselves most pleasing to God; from what sins those, who wish

to please God, ought to abstain; with what sincerity of heart they ought to believe in God; with what devotion to supplicate the Divine mercy; with what frequent diligence to use the sign of the Lord's cross, and so to fortify themselves and all they have against the continual snares of unclean spirits; and how salutary it is for all classes of Christians to participate daily in the body and blood of our Lord, as you well know is done by Christ's Church throughout Italy, Gaul, Africa, Greece, and all the countries of the East. Now, this kind of religion and heavenly devotion, through the neglect of our teachers, has been so long discontinued among almost all the laity of our province, that those who seem to be the most religious among them, communicate in the holy mysteries only on the day of our Lord's birth, the Epiphany and Easter, whilst there are innumerable boys and girls, of innocent and chaste life, as well as young men and women, old men and old women, who without any scruple or debate are able to communicate in the holy mysteries on every Lord's day, nay, on all the birth-days of the holy Apostles or Martyrs, as you yourself have seen done in the Holy Roman and Apostolic Church. Moreover, if married, let any one point out to them the measure of continence, and hint to them the virtue of chastity; and that in this both may have power to act, and be ready to submit.

§ 16. Thus much, most Holy prelate, have I attempted briefly to express, both for the love of you, and for the sake of general utility, with many wishes and exhortations that you endeavour to rescue our nation from its old errors, and bring it back to a more certain and direct path; and that, mindful of a heavenly reward, you persist in bringing to perfection this holy and excellent work, whatever be the rank or condition of those who attempt to impede or hinder your good exertions. For I know that there will be some who will oppose these my exhortations, and especially those who feel that they are themselves involved in those crimes against which I warn you: but you must remember the apostolic answer, "We must obey God rather than man." For it is a command of God, "Sell what ye have and give to the poor; and unless a man shall renounce all things which he possesses, he cannot be my disciple." But there is in these days a tradition among some men, who profess themselves to be servants of God, not only not to sell what they possess, but also to procure what they have not. How, then, can a man dare, if he would enter God's service, either to retain those things, which he possessed whilst he was in the secular life, or under the cloak of a more holy life, heap together riches which before he had not? Since, also, the rebuke of the Apostle is well known, whereby Ananias and Sapphira, attempting so to act, were not corrected by any measure of penance or retribution, but were punished by sentence of death! and yet they sought not to gain what belonged to others, but unmeetly to retain their own. Wherefore it is manifest, how far the thoughts of the Apostles were from making acquisition of money, whose rule in God's service was this, "Blessed are ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God." And, on the other hand, they were alike instructed by a warning of the

opposite tendency; “Woe to you rich, for you have your consolation.” Or, must we suppose that the Apostle erred, and wrote a falsehood, when he admonished us, saying, “Brethren, be not deceived,” and immediately after added, “Neither the covetous, drunkards, nor the rapacious shall possess the kingdom of God.” And, again, “But know ye this, that every one who is a fornicator, or unclean, or covetous, or rapacious, which is the service of idols, has no inheritance in the kingdom of God or Christ.” Since, therefore, the Apostle expressly names covetousness and rapacity to be idolatry, how can those be wrong, who either have kept back their hands from signing a deed of wicked trafficking, even in defiance of the king’s command, or who have also offered their hands to cancel former unjust writings and subscriptions?

§ 17. And, indeed, we must wonder at the rashness of those foolish men, (or rather we should call them blind, and pity their wretchedness,) who, without any regard to the fear of God, are proved to cancel and set at nought what they, the apostles and prophets, have written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, but nevertheless are afraid to erase or annul what themselves, or men like themselves, have written from the dictates of covetousness or luxury, as if, forsooth, it were sacred and sanctioned by Heaven itself. In this, unless I am deceived, they imitate the Gentiles, who despise the worship of God, but bow down before the deities which they have conceived in their own minds, and which their own hands have made. These they fear, worship, adore, and pray to, being indeed worthy of that rebuke of our Lord’s whereby he reproveth the Pharisees, when they preferred their own secondary precepts to the Law of God: “Why do ye also transgress the word of God through your traditions?” But if they shall even produce writings got up in defence of their covetousness, and sanctioned by the subscription of noblemen, I beseech you never to forget the sentence of our Lord, wherein he says, “Every plantation that my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted out.” And I would fain moreover ask you this question, most Holy Prelate? Our Lord protests that “wide is the gate and broad the way which leadeth to destruction, and multitudes there be that enter in thereat; whilst straight is the gate and narrow the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.” What, then, do you believe concerning the life or eternal safety of those, who throughout all their lives are known to be walking through the wide gate and broad way, and do not, even in the trifling things, restrain or resist their passions, whether of the mind or body, for the sake of a heavenly reward? Unless, perhaps, their alms, which amid their daily covetousness and enjoyments they give to the poor, are to be considered as able to exempt them from blame; whereas the hand itself, as well as the conscience which offers a gift to God, ought to be pure and free from offence. Or unless, also, they may be thought to be redeemed, now they are dead, by others, through the mystery of the holy oblation, of which, whilst they were alive, they appeared unworthy? Does the fault of covetousness appear to be trifling in them? I will speak a little more fully on this point. This it was, which rendered Balaam, a man full of the spirit

of prophecy, an outcast from the lot of the saints. It was this which polluted Achan with sharing in the cursed thing, and thereby destroyed him. It stripped Saul of the diadem of the kingdom; it deprived Gehazi of the merits of prophecy, and defiled him and his seed with a perpetual leprosy. It cast down Judas Iscariot from the glory of his apostleship: Ananias and Sapphira, of whom we have before made mention, thereby became unworthy of the society of the monks, and were punished by the death of the body: and, to turn to heavenly examples, the angels were thereby cast down from heaven, the first created beings expelled from a paradise of endless enjoyment. And if you must know, this is that three-headed dog of Hell, called Cerberus in the fables, from whose ravening teeth the Apostle John would save us, when he says, “Beloved, love not the world nor those things that be therein: if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For every thing which is in the world, is the desire of the flesh, and the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world.” Thus much briefly have I said against the poison of covetousness. But if I were to treat in like manner of drunkenness, feasting, luxury, and other contagions of the same kind, my letter would be indefinitely lengthened. May the grace of the Chief Shepherd ever keep you safe for the wholesome feeding of his flock, Prelate, most beloved in our Lord: Amen!

The Latin Text



The village of Monkton, two miles from the monastery at Jarrow — also traditionally ascribed as Bede's birthplace

CONTENTS OF THE LATIN TEXT



In this section of the eBook, readers can view the original Latin text of Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*. You may wish to Bookmark this page for future reference.

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PRAEFATIO

GLORIOSISSIMO REGI CEOLUULFO BAEDA FAMULUS CHRISTI ET PRESBYTER

Historiam gentis Anglorum ecclesiasticam, quam nuper edideram, libentissime tibi desideranti, rex, et prius ad legendum ac probandum transmissi, et nunc ad transscribendum ac plenius ex tempore meditandum retransmitto; satisque studium tuae sinceritatis amplector, quo non solum audiendis scripturae sanctae uerbis aurem sedulus accommodas, uerum etiam noscendis priorum gestis siue dictis, et maxime nostrae gentis uirorum inlustrium, curam uigilanter impendis. Siue enim historia de bonis bona referat, ad imitandum bonum auditor sollicitus instigatur; seu mala commemoret de prauis, nihilominus religiosus ac pius auditor siue lector deuotando quod noxium est ac peruersum, ipse sollertius ad exsequenda ea, quae bona ac Deo digna esse cognouerit, accenditur. Quod ipsum tu quoque uigilantissime deprehendens, historiam memoratam in notitiam tibi simul et eis, quibus te regendis diuina praefecit auctoritas, ob generalis curam salutis latius propalari desideras. Ut autem in his, quae scripsi, uel tibi, uel ceteris auditoribus siue lectoribus huius historiae occasionem dubitandi subtraham, quibus haec maxime auctoribus didicerim, breuiter intimare curabo.

Auctor ante omnes atque adiutor opusculi huius Albinus abba reuerentissimus, uir per omnia doctissimus, extitit; qui in ecclesia Cantuariorum a beatae memoriae Theodoro archiepiscopo et Hadriano abbate, uiris uenerabilibus atque eruditissimis, institutus, diligenter omnia, quae in ipsa Cantuariorum prouincia, uel etiam in contiguis eidem regionibus a discipulis beati papae Gregorii gesta fuere, uel monimentis litterarum, uel seniorum traditione cognouerat; et ea mihi de his, quae memoria digna uidebantur, per religiosum Lundoniensis ecclesiae presbyterum Nothelmum, siue litteris mandata, siue ipsius Nothelmi uiua uoce referenda, transmisit. Qui uidelicet Nothelmus postea Romam ueniens, nonnullas ibi beati Gregorii papae simul et aliorum pontificum epistulas, perscrutato eiusdem sanctae ecclesiae Romanae scrinio, permissu eius, qui nunc ipsi ecclesiae praest Gregorii pontificis, inuenit, reuersusque nobis nostrae historiae inserendas cum consilio praefati Albini reuerentissimi patris adtulit. A principio itaque uoluminis huius usque ad tempus, quo gens Anglorum fidem Christi percepit, ex priorum maxime scriptis hinc inde collectis ea, quae promeremus, didicimus. Exinde autem usque ad tempora praesentia, quae in ecclesia Cantuariorum per discipulos beati papae Gregorii, siue successores eorum, uel sub quibus regibus gesta sint, memorati abbatis Albini industria, Nothelmo, ut diximus, perferente, cognouimus. Qui etiam prouinciae Orientalium simul et Occidentalium Saxonum, nec non et Orientalium Anglorum atque Nordanhymbrorum, a quibus praesulibus, uel quorum tempore regum gratiam

euangelii perceperint, nonnulla mihi ex parte prodiderunt. Denique hortatu praecipue ipsius Albini, ut hoc opus adgredi auderem, prouocatus sum. Sed et Danihel reuerentissimus Occidentalium Saxonum episcopus, qui nunc usque superest, nonnulla mihi de historia ecclesiastica prouinciae ipsius, simul et proxima illi Australium Saxonum, nec non et Uectae insulae litteris mandata declarauit. Qualiter uero per ministerium Ceddi et Ceadda religiosorum Christi sacerdotum, uel prouincia Merciorum ad fidem Christi, quam non nouerat, peruenerit, uel prouincia Orientalium Saxonum fidem, quam olim exsufflauerat, recuperauerit, qualis etiam ipsorum patrum uita uel obitus extiterit, diligenter a fratribus monasterii, quod ab ipsis conditum Læstingaeu cognominatur, agnouimus. Porro in prouincia Orientalium Anglorum, quae fuerint gesta ecclesiastica, partim ex scriptis uel traditione priorum, partim reuerentissimi abbatis Esi relatione conperimus. At uero in prouincia Lindissi, quae sint gesta erga fidem Christi, quaeue successio sacerdotalis extiterit, uel litteris reuerentissimi antistitis Cynibercti uel aliorum fidelium uirorum uiua uoce didicimus. Quae autem in Nordanhymbrorum prouincia, ex quo tempore fidem Christi perceperunt, usque ad praesens per diuersas regiones in ecclesia sint acta, non uno quolibet auctore, sed fidei innumerorum testium, qui haec scire uel meminisse poterant, adsertione cognoui, exceptis his, quae per me ipsum nosse poteram. Inter quae notandum, quod ea, quae de sanctissimo patre et antistite Cudbercto, uel in hoc uolumine, uel in libello gestorum ipsius conscripsi, partim ex eis, quae de illo prius a fratribus ecclesiae Lindisfarnensis scripta repperi, adsumsi, simpliciter fidem historiae, quam legebam, accommodans, partim uero ea, quae certissima fidelium uirorum adtestatione per me ipse cognoscere potui, sollerter adicere curauit. Lectoremque suppliciter obsecro, ut, siqua in his, quae scripsimus, aliter quam se ueritas habet, posita reppererit, non hoc nobis imputet, qui, quod uera lex historiae est, simpliciter ea, quae fama uulgante collegimus, ad instructionem posteritatis litteris mandare studuimus.

Praeterea omnes, ad quos haec eadem historia peruenire potuerit nostrae nationis, legentes siue audientes, suppliciter precor, ut pro meis infirmitatibus et mentis et corporis apud supernam clementiam saepius interuenire meminerint; et in suis quique prouinciis hanc mihi suae remunerationis uicem rependant, ut, qui de singulis prouinciis siue locis sublimioribus, quae memoratu digna atque incolis grata credideram, diligenter adnotare curauit, apud omnes fructum piaie intercessionis inueniam.

LIBER PRIMUS.

[1] Britannia Oceani insula, cui quondam Albion nomen fuit, inter septentrionem et occidentem locata est, Germaniae, Galliae, Hispaniae, maximis Europae partibus, multo interuallo aduersa. Quae per miliapassuum DCCC in Boream longa, latitudinis habet milia CC, exceptis dumtaxat prolixioribus diuersorum promonteriorum tractibus, quibus efficitur, ut circuitus eius quadragies octies LXXV milia conpleat. Habet a meridie Galliam Belgicam, cuius proximum litus transmeantibus aperit ciuitas, quae dicitur Rutubi portus, a gente Anglorum nunc corrupte Reptacastir uocata, interposito mari a Gessoriaco Morynorum gentis litore proximo, traiectu milium L, siue, ut quidam scripsere, stadiorum CCCCL. A tergo autem, unde Oceano infinito patet, Orcadas insulas habet.

Opima frugibus atque arboribus insula, et alendis apta pecoribus ac iumentis; uineas etiam quibusdam in locis germinans; sed et auium ferax terra marique generis diuersi; fluuiis quoque multum piscosis ac fontibus praeclara copiosis, et quidem praecipue issicio abundat, et anguilla. Capiuntur autem saepissime et uituli marini, et delphines, nec non et balenae; exceptis uariorum generibus concyliorum; in quibus sunt et musculae, quibus inclusam saepe margaritam omnis quidem coloris optimam inueniunt, id est et rubicundi, et purpurei, et iacintini, et prasini, sed maxime candidi. Sunt et cocleae satis superque abundantes, quibus tinctura coccinei coloris conficitur, cuius rubor pulcherrimus nullo umquam solis ardore, nulla ualet pluuiarum iniuria pallescere; sed quo uetustior, eo solet esse uenustior. Habet fontes salinarum, habet et fontes calidos, et ex eis fluuios balnearum calidarum omni aetati et sexui per distincta loca iuxta suum cuique modum accommodos. Aqua enim, ut sanctus Basilius dicit, feruidam qualitatem recipit, cum per certa quaedam metalla transcurrit, et fit non solum calida, sed et ardens. Quae etiam uenis metallorum, aeris, ferri, et plumbi, et argenti, fecunda, gignit et lapidem gagatem plurimum optimumque; est autem nigrogemmeus, et ardens igni admotus, incensus serpentes fugat, adtritu calefactus adplicita detinet, aequae ut sucinum. Erat et ciuitatibus quondam XX et VIII nobilissimis insignita, praeter castella innumera, quae et ipsa muris turribus, portis, ac seris erant instructa firmissimis.

Et quia prope sub ipso septentrionali uertice mundi iacet, lucidas aestate noctes habet; ita ut medio saepe tempore noctis in quaestionem ueniat intuentibus, utrum crepusculum adhuc permaneat uespertinum, an iam aduenerit matutinum, utpote nocturno sole non longe sub terris ad orientem boreales per plagas redeunte; unde etiam plurimae longitudinis habet dies aestate, sicut et noctes contra in bruma, sole nimirum tunc Lybicas in partes secedente, id est horarum X et VIII; plurimae item breuitatis noctes aestate, et dies habet in bruma, hoc est sex solummodo aequinoctialium horarum;

cum in Armenia, Macedonia, Italia, ceterisque eiusdem lineae regionibus

longissima dies siue nox XV, breuissima VIII conpleat horas.

Haec in praesenti, iuxta numerum librorum, quibus lex diuina scripta est, quinque gentium linguis, unam eandemque summae ueritatis et uerae sublimitatis scientiam scrutatur, et confitetur, Anglorum uidelicet, Brettonum, Scottorum, Pictorum et Latinorum, quae meditatione scripturarum ceteris omnibus est facta communis.

In primis autem haec insula Brettones solum, a quibus nomen accepit, incolas habuit; qui de tractu Armoricano, ut fertur, Britanniam aduecti, australes sibi partes illius uindicarunt.

Et cum plurimam insulae partem, incipientes ab Austro, possedissent, contigit gentem Pictorum de Scythia, ut perhibent, longis nauibus non multis Oceanum ingressam, circumagente flatu uentorum, extra fines omnes Britanniae Hiberniam peruenisse, eiusque septentrionales oras intrasse, atque inuenta ibi gente Scottorum, sibi quoque in partibus illius sedes petisse, nec inpetrare potuisse. Est autem Hibernia insula omnium post Britanniam maxima, ad occidentem quidem Britanniae sita; sed sicut contra Aquilonem ea breuior, ita in meridiem se trans illius fines plurimum protendens, usque contra Hispaniae septentrionalia, quamuis magno aequore interiacente peruenit. Ad hanc ergo usque peruenientes nauigio Picti, ut diximus, petierunt in ea sibi quoque sedes et habitationem donari.

Respondabant Scotti, quia non ambos eos caperet insula, ‘sed possumus,’ inquiunt, ‘salubre uobis dare consilium, quid agere ualeatis. Nouimus insulam aliam esse non procul a nostra contra ortum solis, quam saepe lucidioribus diebus de longe aspicere solemus. Hanc adire si uultis, habitabilem uobis facere ualetis;

uel, siqui restiterit, nobis auxiliariis utimini.’ Itaque petentes Britanniam Picti, habitare per septentrionales insulae partes coeperunt, nam austrina Brettones occupauerant. Cumque uxores Picti non habentes peterent a Scottis, ea solum condicione dare consenserunt, ut ubi res ueniret in dubium, magis de feminea regum prosapia quam de masculina regem sibi eligerent; quod usque hodie apud Pictos constat esse seruatum.

Procedente autem tempore, Britannia post Brettones et Pictos tertiam Scottorum nationem in Pictorum parte recepit; qui duce Reuda de Hibernia progressi, uel amicitia uel ferro sibimet inter eos sedes, quas hactenus habent, uindicarunt; a quo uidelicet duce usque hodie Dalreudini uocantur, nam lingua eorum daal partem significat.

Hibernia autem et latitudine sui status, et salubritate ac serenitate aerum multum Britanniae praestat, ita ut raro ibi nix plus quam triduana remaneat; nemo propter hiemem aut faena secet aestate, aut stabula fabricet iumentis; nullum ibi reptile uideri soleat, nullus uiuere serpens ualeat; nam saepe illo de Britannia adlati serpentes, mox ut, proximante terris nauigio, odore aeris illius adtacti fuerint, intereunt; quin potius omnia pene, quae de eadem insula sunt, contra uenenum ualent. Denique uidimus, quibusdam a serpente percussis, rasa folia codicum, qui de Hibernia fuerant, et ipsam rasuram aquae inmissam

ac potui datam, talibus protinus totam uim ueneni grassantis, totum inflati corporis absumsisse ac sedasse tumorem. Diues lactis ac mellis insula, nec uinearum expers, piscium uolucrumque, sed et ceruorum caprearumque uenatu insignis. Haec autem proprie patria Scottorum est; ab hac egressi, ut diximus, tertiam in Britannia Brettonibus et Pictis gentem addiderunt.

Est autem sinus maris permaximus, qui antiquitus gentem Brettonum a Pictis secernebat, qui ab occidente in terras longo spatio erumpit, ubi est ciuitas Brettonum munitissima usque hodie, quae uocatur Alcluith; ad cuius uidelicet sinus partem septentrionalem Scotti, quos diximus, aduenientes sibi locum patriae fecerunt.

[2] Verum eadem Britannia Romanis usque ad Gaium Iulium Caesarem inaccessa atque incognita fuit; qui anno ab Urbe condita DCXCIII, ante vero incarnationis dominicae tempus anno LXmo, functus gradu consulatus cum Lucio Bibulo, dum contra Germanorum Gallorumque gentes, qui Hreno tantum flumine dirimebantur, bellum gereret, venit ad Morianos, unde in Britanniam proximus et brevissimus transitus est; et navibus (h)onerariis atque actuariis circiter octoginta praeparatis, in Britanniam transvehitur, ubi acerba primum pugna fatigatus, deinde adversa tempestate correptus, plurimam classis partem, et non paruum numerum militum, equitum vero pene omnem disperdidit. Regressus in Galliam, legiones in hiberna dimisit, ac DCtas naves utriusque commodi fieri imperavit; quibus iterum in Britanniam primo vere transvectus, dum ipse in hostem cum exercitu pergit, naves in anchoris stantes tempestate correptae vel conlissae inter se, vel arenis inlissae ac dissolutae sunt; ex quibus XL perierunt, ceterae cum magna difficultate reparatae sunt. Caesaris equitatus primo congressu a Brittanis victus, ibique Labienus tribunus occisus est. Secundo proelio cum magno suorum discrimine victos Brittanos in fugam vertit. Inde ad flumen Tamensim profectus.

In huius ulteriore ripa Cassobellauno duce immensa hostium multitudo consederat, ripamque fluminis ac pene totum sub aqua uadum acutissimis sudibus praestruxerat; quarum uestigia sudium ibidem usque hodie uisuntur, et uidetur inspectantibus, quod singulae earum ad modum humani femoris grossae, et circumfusae plumbo immobiliter erant in profundum fluminis infixae. Quod ubi a Romanis deprehensum ac uitatum est, barbari legionum impetum non ferentes, siluis sese abdidere, unde crebris eruptionibus Romanos grauiter ac saepe lacerabant. Interea Trinouantum firmissima ciuitas cum Androgio duce, datis XL obsidibus, Caesari sese dedit. Quod exemplum secutae, urbes aliae conplures in foedus Romanorum uenerunt. Hisdem demonstrantibus, Caesar oppidum Cassobellauni inter duas paludes situm, obtentu insuper siluarum munitum, omnibusque rebus confertissimum tandem graui pugna cepit. Exin Caesar a Brittanis reuersus in Galliam, postquam legiones in hiberna misit, repentinis bellorum tumultibus undique circumuentus et conflictatus est.

[3] Anno autem ab Urbe condita DCCXCVIII Claudius imperator ab Augusto quartus, cupiens utilem reipublicae ostentare principem, bellum

ubique et uictoriam undecumque quaesiuit. Itaque expeditionem in Britanniam mouit, quae excitata in tumultum propter non redhibitos transfugas uidebatur; transuictus in insulam est, quam neque ante Iulium Caesarem, neque post eum quisquam adire ausus fuerat, ibique sine ullo proelio ac sanguine intra paucissimos dies plurimam insulae partem in deditionem recepit. Orcadas etiam insulas ultra Britanniam in oceano positas, Romano adiecit imperio, ac sexto, quam profectus erat, mense Romam rediit, filioque suo Brittanici nomen inposuit. Hoc autem bellum quarto imperii sui anno conpleuit, qui est annus ab incarnatione Domini XLVI; quo etiam anno fames grauissima per Syriam facta est, quae in Actibus Apostolorum per prophetam Agabum praedicta esse memoratur.

Ab eodem Claudio Uespasianus, qui post Neronem imperauit, in Britanniam missus, etiam Uectam insulam, Britanniae proximam a meridie, Romanorum ditioni subiugauit; quae habet ab oriente in occasum XXX circiter milia passuum, ab austro in boream XII, in orientalibus suis partibus mari sex milium, in occidentalibus trium, a meridiano Britanniae littore distans. Succedens autem Claudio in imperium Nero, nihil omnino in re militari ausus est. Unde inter alia Romani regni detrimenta innumera, Britanniam pene amisit; nam duo sub eo nobilissima oppida illic capta atque subuersa sunt.

[4] Anno ab incarnatione Domini CmoLmoVIto Marcus Antoninus Uerus XIII ab Augusto regnum cum Aurelio Commodo fratre suscepit; quorum temporibus cum Eleuther uir sanctus pontificatui Romanae ecclesiae praeesset, misit ad eum Lucius Britanniarum rex epistolam, obsecrans, ut per eius mandatum Christianus efficeretur; et mox effectum piae postulationis consecutus est; susceptamque fidem Britanni usque in tempora Diocletiani principis inuiolatam integramque quietam in pace seruabant.

[5] Anno ab incarnatione Domini CLXXXVIII Seuerus, genere Afer Tripolitanus ab oppido Lepti, XVII ab Augusto imperium adeptus X et VII annis tenuit. Hic natura saeuus, multis semper bellis lacessitus, fortissime quidem rempublicam, sed laboriosissime rexit.

Uictor ergo ciuiliu bellorum, quae ei grauissima occurrerant, in Britannias defectu pene omnium sociorum trahitur. Ubi magnis grauibisque proeliis saepe gestis receptam partem insulae a ceteris indomitis gentibus, non muro, ut quidam aestimant, sed uallo distinguendam putauit. Murus etenim de lapidibus, uallum uero, quo ad repellendam uim hostium castra muniuntur, fit de cespitibus, quibus circumcisis, e terra uelut murus exstruitur altus supra terram, ita ut in ante sit fossa, de qua leuati sunt cespites, supra quam sudes de lignis fortissimis praefiguntur. Itaque Seuerus magnam fossam firmissimumque uallum, crebris insuper turribus communitum, a mari ad mare duxit. Ibique apud Eboracum oppidum morbo obiit.

Reliquit duos filios, Bassianum et Getam; quorum Geta hostis puplicus iudicatus interiit, Bassianus, Antonio cognomine adsumpto, regno potitus est.

[6] Anno incarnationis dominicae CCLXXXVI Diocletianus XXXIII ab

Augusto imperator ab exercitu electus annis XX fuit, Maximianumque cognomento Herculium socium creauit imperii. Quorum tempore Corausius quidam, genere quidem infimus, sed consilio et manu promptus, cum ad obseruanda Oceani litora, quae tunc Franci et Saxones infestabant, positus, plus in perniciem quam in profectum reipublicae ageret, ereptam praedonibus praedam nulla ex parte restituendo dominis, sed sibi soli uindicando; accendens suspicionem, quia ipsos quoque hostes ad incursandos fines artificii neglegentia permetteret; quam ob rem a Maximiano iussus occidi purpuram sumsit, ac Britannias occupauit; quibus sibi per VII annos fortissime uindicatis ac retentis, tandem fraude Allecti socii sui interfectus est. Allectus postea ereptam Carausio insulam per triennium tenuit; quem Asclipiodotus praefectus praetorio obpressit, Britanniamque post X annos recepit.

Interea Diocletianus in oriente, Maximianus Herculius in occidente uastari ecclesias, affligi, interficique Christianos, decimo post Neronem loco praeceperunt; quae persecutio omnibus fere ante actis diuturnior atque inmanior fuit; nam per X annos incendiis ecclesiarum, proscriptionibus innocentum, caedibus martyrum incessabiliter acta est. Denique etiam Britanniam tum plurima confessionis Deo deuotae gloria sublimauit.

[7] Siquidem in ea passus est sanctus Albanus, de quo presbyter Fortunatus in Laude uirginum, cum beatorum martyrum, qui de toto orbe ad Dominum uenirent, mentionem faceret, ait:

Albanum egregium fecunda Britania profert.

Qui uidelicet Albanus, paganus adhuc, cum perfidorum principum mandata aduersum Christianos saeuirent, clericum quendam persecutores fugientem hospitio recepit; quem dum orationibus continuis ac uigiliis die noctuque studere conspiceret, subito diuina gratia respectus, exemplum fidei ac pietatis illius coepit aemulari, ac salutaribus eius exhortationibus paulatim edoctus, relictis idolatriae tenebris, Christianus integro ex corde factus est. Cumque praefatus clericus aliquot diebus apud eum hospitaretur, peruenit ad aures nefandi principis confessorem Christi, cui necdum fuerat locus martyrii deputatus, penes Albanum latere. Unde statim iussit milites eum diligentius inquirere. Qui cum ad tugurium martyris peruenissent, mox se sanctus Albanus pro hospite ac magistro suo, ipsius habitu, id est caracalla, qua uestiebatur, indutus, militibus exhibuit, atque ad iudicem uinctus perductus est.

Contigit autem iudicem ea hora, qua ad eum Albanus adducebatur, aris adsistere, ac daemonibus hostias offerre. Cumque uidisset Albanum, mox ira succensus nimia, quod se ille ultro pro hospite, quem susceperat, militibus offerre, ac discrimini dare praesumsisset, ad simulacra daemonum, quibus adsistebat, eum iussit pertrahi: ‘Quia rebellem,’ inquit, ‘ac sacrilegum celare quam militibus reddere maluisti, ut contemtor diuum meritam blasphemiae suae poenam lueret, quaecumque illi debebantur supplicia, tu soluere habes, si a cultu nostrae religionis discedere temtas.’ At sanctus Albanus, qui se ultro persecutoribus fidei Christianum esse prodiderat,

nequaquam minas principis metuit; sed accinctus armis militiae spiritualis, palam se iussis illius parere nolle pronuntiabat. Tum iudex: 'Cuius,' inquit, 'familiae uel generis es?' Albanus respondit: 'Quid ad te pertinet, qua sim stirpe genitus? sed si ueritatem religionis audire desideras, Christianum iam me esse, Christianisque officiis uacare cognosce.' Ait iudex: 'Nomen tuum quaero, quod sine mora mihi insinua.' At ille: 'Albanus,' inquit, 'a parentibus uocor, et Deum uerum ac uiuum, qui uniuersa creauit, adoro semper, et colo.' Tum iudex repletus iracundia dixit: 'Si uis perennis uitae felicitate perfrui, diis magnis sacrificare ne differas.' Albanus respondit: 'Sacrificia haec, quae a uobis redduntur daemonibus, nec auxiliari subiectis possunt, nec supplicantium sibi desideria uel uota complere. Quin immo, quicumque his sacrificia simulacris obtulerit, aeternas inferni poenas pro mercede recipiet.'

His auditis, iudex nimio furore commotus, caedi sanctum Dei confessorem a tortoribus praecepit, autumans se uerberibus, quam uerbis non poterat, cordis eius emollire constantiam. Qui cum tormentis afficeretur acerrimis, patienter haec pro Domino, immo gaudenter ferebat. At ubi iudex illum tormentis superari, uel a cultu Christianae religionis reuocari non posse persensit, capite eum plecti iussit.

Cumque ad mortem duceretur, peruenit ad flumen, quod muro et harena, ubi feriendus erat, meatu rapidissimo diuidebatur; uiditque ibi non paruam hominum multitudinem utriusque sexus, condicionis diuersae et aetatis, quae sine dubio diuinitatis instinctu ad obsequium beatissimi confessoris ac martyris uocabatur, et ita fluminis ipsius occupabat pontem, ut intra uesperam transire uix posset. Denique cunctis pene egressis, iudex sine obsequio in ciuitate substiterat.

Igitur sanctus Albanus, cui ardens inerat deuotio mentis ad martyrium ocus peruenire, accessit ad torrentem, et dirigens ad caelum oculos, illico siccato alueo, uidit undam suis cecidisse ac uiam dedisse uestigiis. Quod cum inter alios etiam ipse carnifex, qui eum percussurus erat, uidisset, festinauit ei, ubi ad locum destinatum morti uenerat, occurrere, diuino nimirum admonitus instinctu, proiectoque ense, quem strictum tenuerat, pedibus eius aduoluitur, multum desiderans, ut cum martyre, uel pro martyre, quem percutere iubebatur, ipse potius mereretur percuti.

Dum ergo is ex persecutore factus esset collega ueritatis et fidei, ac iacente ferro esset inter carnifices iusta cunctatio, montem cum turbis reuerentissimus Dei confessor ascendit; qui oportune laetus, gratia decentissima, quingentis fere passibus ab harena situs est, uariis herbarum floribus depictus, immo usque quaque uestitus; in quo nihil repente arduum, nihil praeceps, nihil abruptum, quem lateribus longe lateque deductum in modum aequoris natura conplanat, dignum uidelicet eum, pro insita sibi specie uenustatis, iam olim reddens, qui beati martyris cruore dicaretur. In huius ergo uertice sanctus Albanus dari sibi a Deo aquam rogauit, statimque, incluso meatu, ante pedes eius fons perennis exortus est, ut omnes agnoscerent etiam torrentem martyri obsequium detulisse; neque enim fieri poterat, ut in arduo montis cacumine

martyr aquam, quam in fluuio non reliquerat, peteret, si hoc oportunum esse non uideret.

Qui uidelicet fluuius, ministerio persoluto, deuotione completa, officii testimonium relinquens, reuersus est ad naturam. Decollatus itaque martyr fortissimus ibidem accepit coronam uitae, quam repromisit Deus diligentibus se. Sed ille, qui piis ceruicibus impias intulit manus, gaudere super mortuum non est permissus;

namque oculi eius in terram una cum beati martyris capite deciderunt.

Decollatus est ibi etiam tum miles ille, qui antea superno nutu correptus, sanctum Dei confessorem ferire recusauit; de quo nimirum constat, quia, etsi fonte baptismatis non est ablutus, sui tamen est sanguinis lauacro mundatus, ac regni caelestis dignus factus ingressu. Tum iudex, tanta miraculorum caelestium nouitate percussus, cessari mox a persecutione praecepit, honorem referre incipiens caedi sanctorum, per quam eos opinabatur prius a Christianae fidei posse deuotione cessare. Passus est autem beatus Albanus die .X. Kalendarum Iuliarum iuxta ciuitatem Uerolamium, quae nunc a gente Anglorum Uerlamaca^{stir} siue Uaeclingaca^{stir} appellatur, ubi postea, redeunte temporum Christianorum serenitate, ecclesia est mirandi operis atque eius martyrio condigna extracta. In quo uidelicet loco usque ad hanc diem curatio infirmorum, et frequentium operatio uirtutum celebrari non desinit. Passi sunt ea tempestate Aaron et Iulius Legionum urbis ciues, aliique utriusque sexus diuersis in locis perplures, qui diuersis cruciatibus torti, et inaudita membrorum discerptione lacerati, animas ad supernae ciuitatis gaudia perfecto agone miserunt.

[8] At ubi turbo persecutionis quieuit, progressi in publicum fideles Christi, qui se tempore discriminis siluis ac desertis abditisue speluncis occulerant, renouant ecclesias ad solum usque destructas, basilicas sanctorum martyrum fundant, construunt, perficiunt, ac ueluti uictricia signa passim propalant, dies festos celebrant, sacra mundo corde atque ore conficiunt. Mansitque haec in ecclesiis Christi, quae erant in Brittania, pax usque ad tempora Arrianae uesaniae, quae, corrupto orbe toto, hanc etiam insulam extra orbem tam longe remotam, ueneno sui infecit erroris; et hac quasi uia pestilentiae trans oceanum patefacta, non mora, omnis se lues hereseos cuiusque, insulae noui semper aliquid audire gaudenti, et nil certi firmiter obtinenti infudit.

His temporibus Constantius, qui uiuente Diocletiano Galliam Hispaniamque regebat, uir summae mansuetudinis et ciuilitatis, in Brittania morte obiit. Hic Constantinum filium ex concubina Helena creatum imperatorem Galliarum reliquit. Scribit autem Eutropius, quod Constantinus in Brittania creatus imperator, patri in regnum successerit; cuius temporibus Arriana heresis exorta, et in Nicena synodo detecta atque damnata, nihilominus exitiabile perfidiae suae uirus, ut diximus, non solum orbis totius, sed et insularum ecclesiis aspersit.

[9] Anno ab incarnatione Domini CCCLXXVII, Gratianus XL ab Augusto post mortem Ualentis sex annis imperium tenuit, quamuis iamdudum antea

cum patruo Ualente et cum Ualentiniano fratre regnaret. Qui cum adflictum et pene conlapsum reipublicae statum uideret, Theodosium Hispanum uirum restituendae reipublicae necessitate apud Syrmium purpura induit, Orientisque et Thraciae simul praefecit imperio. Qua tempestate Maximus uir quidem strenuus et probus, atque Augusto dignus, nisi contra sacramenti fidem per tyrannidem emersisset, in Britannia inuitus propemodum ab exercitu imperator creatus, in Galliam transiit. Ibi Gratianum Augustum subita incursione perterritum, atque in Italiam transire meditantem, dolis circumuentum interfecit, fratremque eius Ualentinianum Augustum Italia expulit. Ualentinianus in orientem fugiens, a Theodosio paterna pietate susceptus, mox etiam imperio restitutus est; clauso uidelicet intra muros Aquileiae, capto atque occiso ab eis Maximo tyranno.

[10] Anno ab incarnatione Domini CCCXCIII Arcadius filius Theodosii cum fratre Honorio, XLIII ab Augusto regnum suscipiens, tenuit annos XIII. Cuius temporibus Pelagius Bretto contra auxilium gratiae supernae uenena suae perfidiae longe lateque dispersit, utens cooperatore Iuliano de Campania, quem dudum amissi episcopatus intemperans cupido exagitabat; quibus sanctus Augustinus, sicut et ceteri patres orthodoxi, multis sententiarum catholicarum milibus responderunt, nec eorum tamen dementiam corrigere ualebant; sed, quod grauius est, correpta eorum uesania magis augescere contradicendo, quam fauendo ueritati uoluit emundari. Quod pulchre uersibus heroicis Prosper rethor insinuat, cum ait:

‘Contra Augustinum narratur serpere quidam Scriptor, quem dudum liuor adurit edax.

Quis caput obscuris contectum utcumque cauernis Tollere humo miserum propulit anguiculum?

Aut hunc fruge sua aequorei pauere Britanni, Aut hic Campano gramine corda tumet.’

[11] Anno ab incarnatione Domini CCCCVII, tenente imperium Honorio Augusto, filio Theodosii minoris, loco ab Augusto X.LIII, ante biennium Romanae inruptionis, quae per Halaricum regem Gothorum facta est, cum gentes Halanorum, Sueuorum, Uandalorum, multaeque cum his aliae, protritit Francis, transito Hreno, totas per Gallias saeuirent, apud Britannias Gratianus municeps tyrannus creatur, et occiditur. Huius loco Constantinus ex infima militia propter solam spem nominis sine merito uirtutis eligitur; qui continuo, ut inuasit imperium, in Gallias transiit. Ibi saepe a barbaris incertis foederibus inlusus, detrimento magis reipublicae fuit; unde mox, iubente Honorio, Constantius comes in Galliam cum exercitu profectus, apud Arelatem ciuitatem eum clausit, cepit, occidit;

Constantemque filium eius, quem ex monacho Caesarem fecerat, Gerontius comes suus apud Uiennam interfecit.

Fracta est autem Roma a Gothis anno milesimo CLXIII suae conditionis, ex quo tempore Romani in Britannia regnare cessarunt, post annos ferme CCCCLXX, ex quo Gaius Iulius Caesar eandem insulam adiit. Habitabant

autem intra uallum, quod Seuerum trans insulam fecisse commemorauimus, ad plagam meridianam, quod ciuitates, farus, pontes, et stratae ibidem factae usque hodie testantur; ceterum posteriores Britanniae partes, uel eas etiam, quae ultra Britanniam sunt, insulas iure dominandi possidebant.

[12] Exin Britannia in parte Brettonum, omni armato milite, militaribus copiis uniuersis, tota floridae iuuentutis alacritate spoliata, quae tyrannorum temeritate abducta nusquam ultra domum rediit, praedae tantum patuit, utpote omnis bellici usus prorsus ignara; denique subito duabus gentibus transmarinis uehementer saeuis, Scottorum a circio, Pictorum ab aquilone, multos stupet gemitque per annos. Transmarinas autem dicimus has gentes, non quod extra Britanniam essent positae; sed quia a parte Brettonum erant remotae, duobus sinibus maris interiacentibus, quorum unus ab orientali mari, alter ab occidentali, Britanniae terras longe lateque inrumpit, quamuis ad se inuicem pertingere non possint.

Orientalis habet in medio sui urbem Giudi, occidentalis supra se, hoc est ad dexteram sui, habet urbem Alcluith, quod lingua eorum significat petram Cluith; est enim iuxta fluuium nominis illius.

Ob harum ergo infestationem gentium Brettones legatos Romam cum epistulis mittentes, lacrimosis precibus auxilia flagitabant, subiectionemque continuam, dummodo hostis imminens longius arceretur, promittebant. Quibus mox legio destinatur armata, quae, ubi insulam aduecta, et congressa est cum hostibus, magnam eorum multitudinem sternens, ceteros sociorum finibus expulit; eosque interim a dirissima depressione liberatos, hortata est instruere inter duo maria trans insulam murum, qui arcendis hostibus posset esse praesidio; sicque domum cum triumpho magno reuersa est. At insulani murum, quem iussi fuerant, non tam lapidibus quam cespitibus construentes, utpote nullum tanti operis artificem habentes, ad nihil utilem statuunt. Fecerunt autem eum inter duo freta uel sinus, de quibus diximus, maris, per milia passuum plurima; ut, ubi aquarum munitio deerat, ibi praesidio ualli fines suos ab hostium inruptione defenderent. Cuius operis ibidem facti, id est ualli latissimi et altissimi, usque hodie certissima uestigia cernere licet. Incipit autem duorum ferme milium spatio a monasterio Aebbercurnig ad occidentem in loco, qui sermone Pictorum Peanfahel, lingua autem Anglorum Penneltun appellatur; et tendens contra occidentem terminatur iuxta urbem Alcluith.

Uerum priores inimici, ut Romanum militem abisse conspexerant, mox aduecti nauibus inrumpunt terminos, caeduntque omnia, et quasi maturam segetem obuia quaeque metunt, calcant, transeunt; unde rursum mittuntur Romam legati, flebili uoce auxilium inplorantes, ne penitus misera patria deleretur, ne nomen Romanae prouinciae, quod apud eos tam diu claruerat, exterarum gentium improbitate obrutum uilesceret. Rursum mittitur legio, quae inopinata tempore autumnu adueniens, magnas hostium strages dedit, eosque, qui euadere poterant, omnes trans maria fugauit, qui prius anniuersarias praedas trans maria nullo obsistente cogere solebant.

Tum Romani denuntiauere Brettonibus non se ultra ob eorum defensionem

tam laboriosis expeditionibus posse fatigari; ipsos potius monent arma corripere, et certandi cum hostibus studium subire, qui non aliam ob causam, quam si ipsi inertia soluerentur, eis possent esse fortiores. Quin etiam, quia et hoc sociis, quos derelinquere cogeantur, aliquid commodi adlaturum putabant, murum a mari ad mare recto tramite inter urbes, quae ibidem ob metum hostium factae fuerant, ubi et Seuerus quondam uallum fecerat, firmo de lapide conlocarunt; quem uidelicet murum hactenus famosum atque conspicuum, sumtu puplico priuatoque, adiuncta secum Brittanorum manu, construebant, VIII pedes latum, et XII altum, recta ab oriente in occasum linea, ut usque hodie intuentibus clarum est; quo mox condito dant fortia segni populo monita, praebent instituendorum exemplaria armorum. Sed et in litore oceani ad meridiem, quo naues eorum habebantur, quia et inde barbarorum inruptio timebatur, turres per interualla ad prospectum maris conlocant, et ualedicunt sociis tanquam ultra non reuersuri.

Quibus ad sua remeantibus, cognita Scotti Pictique reditus denegatione, redeunt confestim ipsi, et solito confidentiores facti, omnem aquilonalem extremamque insulae partem pro indigenis ad murum usque capessunt. Statuitur ad haec in edito arcis acies segnis, ubi trementi corde stupida die noctuque marcebat. At contra non cessant uncinata hostium tela; ignaui propugnatores miserrime de muris tracti solo adlidebantur. Quid plura? relictis ciuitatibus ac muro fugiunt, disperguntur. Insequitur hostis, adcelerantur strages cunctis crudeliores prioribus. Sicut enim agni a feris, ita miseri ciues discerpuntur ab hostibus; unde a mansionibus ac possessiunculis suis eiecti, imminens sibi famis periculum latrocinio ac rapacitate mutua temperabant, augentes externas domesticis motibus clades, donec omnis regio totius cibi sustentaculo, excepto uenandi solacio, uacuaretur.

[13] Anno dominicae incarnationis CCCCXXIII, Theodosius iunior post Honorium XLV ab Augusto regnum suscipiens, XX et VI annis tenuit;

cuius anno imperii VIII Palladius ad Scottos in Christum credentes a pontifice Romanae ecclesiae Celestino primus mittitur episcopus.

Anno autem regni eius XXIII, Aetius uir inlustris, qui et patricius fuit, tertium cum Simmacho gessit consulatum. Ad hunc pauperculae Brettonum reliquiae mittunt epistolam, cuius hoc principium est: 'Aetio ter consuli gemitus Brittanorum;' et in processu epistolae ita suas calamitates explicant: 'Repellunt barbari ad mare, repellit mare ad barbaros; inter haec oriuntur duo genera funerum, aut iugulamur, aut mergimur.' Neque haec tamen agentes quicquam ab illo auxilii impetrare quiuerunt, utpote qui grauissimis eo tempore bellis cum Blaedla et Attila regibus Hunorum erat occupatus; et quamuis anno ante hunc proximo Blaedla Attilae fratris sui sit interemtus insidiis, Attila tamen ipse adeo intolerabilis reipublicae remansit hostis, ut totam pene Europam, excisis inuasisque ciuitatibus atque castellis, conroderet. Quin et hisdem temporibus fames Constantinopolim inuasit; nec mora pestis secuta est; sed et plurimi eiusdem urbis muri cum LVII turribus conruerunt;

multis quoque ciuitatibus conlapsis, fames et aerum pestifer odor plura

hominum milia iumentorumque deleuit.

[14] Interea Brettones famas sua praefata magis magisque adficiens, ac famam suae malitiae posteris diurnam relinquens, multos eorum coegit uictas infestis praedonibus dare manus, alios uero numquam, quin potius confidentes in diuinum, ubi humanum cessabat auxilium, de ipsis montibus, speluncis, ac saltibus continue rebellabant; et tum primum inimicis, qui per multos annos praedas in terra agebant, strages dare coeperunt. Reuertuntur ergo inpudentes grassatores Hiberni domus, post non longum tempus reuersuri; Picti in extrema parte insulae tunc primum et deinceps quieuerunt, praedas tamen nonnumquam exinde et contritiones de Brettonum gente agere non cessarunt.

Cessante autem uastatione hostili, tantis frugum copiis insula, quantas nulla retro aetas meminit, affluere coepit; cum quibus et luxuria crescere, et hanc continuo omnium lues scelerum comitari adcelerauit; crudelitas praecipue, et odium ueritatis, amorque mendacii, ita ut, siquis eorum mitior et ueritati aliquatenus propior uideretur, in hunc quasi Britanniae subuersorem omnium odia telaque sine respectu contorquerentur. Et non solum haec saeculares uiri, sed etiam ipse grex Domini eiusque pastores egerunt;

ebrietati, animositati, litigio, contentioni, inuidiae, ceterisque huiusmodi facinoribus sua colla, abiecto leui iugo Christi, subdentes. Interea subito corruptae mentis homines acerba pestis corripuit, quae in breui tantam eius multitudinem strauit, ut ne sepeliendis quidem mortuis uiui sufficerent; sed ne morte quidem suorum, nec timore mortis hi, qui supererant, a morte animae, qua peccando sternebantur, reuocari poterant. Unde non multo post acrior gentem peccatricem ultio diri sceleris secuta est. Initum namque est consilium, quid agendum, ubi quaerendum esset praesidium ad euitandas uel repellendas tam feras tamque creberrimas gentium aquilonalium inruptiones; placuitque omnibus cum suo rege Uurtigerno, ut Saxonum gentem de transmarinis partibus in auxilium uocarent; quod Domini nutu dispositum esse constat, ut ueniret contra improbos malum, sicut euidentius rerum exitus probauit.

[15] Anno ab incarnatione Domini CCCXLVIII Marcianus cum Valentiniano XLVI ab Augusto regnum adeptus, VII annis tenuit. Tunc Anglorum siue Saxonum gens, inuitata a rege praefato, Britanniam tribus longis nauibus aduehitur, et in orientali parte insulae, iubente eodem rege, locum manendi, quasi pro patria pugnatura, re autem uera hanc expugnatura, suscipit. Inito ergo certamine cum hostibus, qui ab aquilone ad aciem uenerant, uictoriam sumere Saxones. Quod ubi domi nuntiatum est, simul et insulae fertilitas, ac segnitia Brettonum; mittitur confestim illo classis prolixior, armatorum ferens manum fortiorem, quae praemissae adiuncta cohorti inuincibilem fecit exercitum. Susceperunt ergo, qui aduenerant, donantibus Brittanis, locum habitationis inter eos, ea condicione, ut hi pro patriae pace et salute contra aduersarios militarent, illi militantibus debita stipendia conferrent.

Aduenerant autem de tribus Germaniae populis fortioribus, id est Saxonibus, Anglis, Iutis. De Iutarum origine sunt Cantuarii et Uictuarii, hoc est ea gens, quae Uectam tenet insulam, et ea, quae usque hodie in prouincia Occidentalium Saxonum Iutarum natio nominatur, posita contra ipsam insulam Uectam. De Saxonibus, id est ea regione, quae nunc Antiquorum Saxonum cognominatur, uenere Orientales Saxones, Meridiani Saxones, Occidui Saxones. Porro de Anglis, hoc est de illa patria, quae Angulus dicitur, et ab eo tempore usque hodie manere desertus inter prouincias Iutarum et Saxonum perhibetur, Orientales Angli, Mediterranei Angli, Mercii, tota Nordanhymbrorum progenies, id est illarum gentium, quae ad Boream Humbri fluminis inhabitant, ceterique Anglorum populi sunt orti. Duces fuisse perhibentur eorum primi duo fratres Hengist et Horsa; e quibus Horsa postea occisus in bello a Brettonibus, hactenus in orientalibus Cantiae partibus monumentum habet suo nomine insigne. Erant autem filii Uictgilsii, cuius pater Uitta, cuius pater Uecta, cuius pater Uoden, de cuius stirpe multarum prouinciarum regum genus originem duxit.

Non mora ergo, confluentibus certatim in insulam gentium memoratarum cateruis, grandescere populus coepit aduenarum, ita ut ipsis quoque, qui eos aduocauerant, indigenis essent terrori. Tum subito inito ad tempus foedere cum Pictis, quos longius iam bellando pepulerant, in socios arma uertere incipiunt. Et primum quidem annonas sibi eos affluentius ministrare cogunt, quaerentesque occasionem diuortii, protestantur, nisi profusior sibi alimentorum copia daretur, se cuncta insulae loca rupto foedere uastaturos. Neque aliquanto segnius minas effectibus prosequuntur. Siquidem, ut breuiter dicam, accensus manibus paganorum ignis, iustas de sceleribus populi Dei ultiones expetiit, non illius inpar, qui quondam a Chaldaeis succensus, Hierosolymorum moenia, immo aedificia cuncta consumpsit.

Sic enim et hic agente impio uictore, immo disponente iusto Iudice, proximas quasque ciuitates agrosque depopulans, ab orientali mari usque ad occidentale, nullo prohibente, suum continuauit incendium, totamque prope insulae pereuntis superficiem obtexit. Ruebant aedificia publica simul et priuata, passim sacerdotes inter altaria trucidabantur, praesules cum populis sine ullo respectu honoris, ferro pariter et flammis absumebantur; nec erat, qui crudeliter interemtis sepulturae traderet. Itaque nonnulli de miserandis reliquiis in montibus comprehensi, acruatim iugulabantur; alii fame confecti procedentes manus hostibus dabant, pro accipiendis alimentorum subsidiis aeternum subituri seruitium, si tamen non continuo trucidarentur; alii transmarinas regiones dolentes petebant; alii perstantes in patria trepidi pauperem uitam in montibus, siluis, uel rupibus arduis suspecta semper mente agebant.

[16] At ubi hostilis exercitus exterminatis dispersisque insulae indigenis, domum reuersus est, coeperunt et illi paulatim uires animosque resumere, emergentes de latibulis, quibus abditi fuerant, et unanimo consensu auxilium caeleste precantes, nec usque ad internicionem usquequaue delerentur.

Utebantur eo tempore duce Ambrosio Aureliano, uiro modesto, qui solus forte Romanae gentis praefatae tempestati superfuerat, occisis in eadem parentibus regium nomen et insigne ferentibus. Hoc ergo duce uires capessunt Brettones, et uictores prouocantes ad proelium, uictoriam ipsi Deo fauente suscipiunt. Et ex eo tempore nunc ciues, nunc hostes uincebant, usque ad annum obsessionis Badonici montis, quando non minimas eisdem hostibus strages dabant, XLmo circiter et IIIo anno aduentus eorum in Britanniam. Sed haec postmodum.

[17] Ante paucos sane aduentus eorum annos heresis Pelagiana per Agricolam inlata, Seueriani episcopi Pelagiani filium, fidem Britanniarum feda peste commaculauerat. Uerum Britannii, cum neque suscipere dogma peruersum gratiam Christi blasphemando ullatenus uellent, neque uersutiam nefariae persuasionis refutare uerbis certando sufficerent, inueniunt salubre consilium, ut a Gallicanis antistitibus auxilium belli spiritualis inquirant. Quam ob causam collecta magna synodo quaerebatur in commune, qui illic ad succurrendum fidei mitti deberent; atque omnium iudicio electi sunt apostolici sacerdotes Germanus Autissidorensis et Lupus Trecasenae ciuitatis episcopi, qui ad confirmandam fidem gratiae caelestis Britannias uenirent. Qui cum prompta deuotione preces et iussa sanctae ecclesiae suscepissent, intrant oceanum et usque ad medium itineris, quo a Gallico sinu Britannias usque tenditur, secundis flatibus nauis tuta uolabat. Tum subito occurrit pergentibus inimica uis daemonum, qui tantos talesque uiros ad recuperandam tendere populorum salutem inuiderent; concitant procellas, caelum diemque nubium nocte subducunt; uentorum furores uela non sustinent;

cedebant ministeria uicta nautarum; ferebatur nauigium oratione, non uiribus; et casu dux ipse uel pontifex fractus corpore, lassitudine ac sopore resolutus est. Tum uero, quasi repugnatore cessante, tempestas excitata conualuit, et iam nauigium superfusus fluctibus mergebatur. Tum beatus Lupus omnesque turbati excitant seniore elementis furentibus obponendum; qui periculi inmanitate constantior, Christum inuocat, et adsumto in nomine sanctae Trinitatis leui aquae spargine fluctus saeuientes obprimit, collegam commonet, hortatur uniuersos, oratio uno ore et clamore profunditur;

adest diuinitas, fugantur inimici, tranquillitas serena subsequitur, uenti e contrario ad itineris ministeria reuertuntur, decursisque breui spatiis pelagi, optati littoris quiete potiuntur. Ibi conueniens ex diuersis partibus multitudo excepit sacerdotes, quos uenturos etiam uaticinatio aduersa praedixerat. Nuntiabant enim sinistri spiritus, quod timebant, qui imperio sacerdotum dum ab obsessis corporibus detruduntur, et tempestatis ordinem, et pericula, quae intulerant, fatebantur, uictosque se eorum meritis et imperio non negabant.

Interea Britanniarum insulam apostolici sacerdotes raptim opinione, praedicatione, uirtutibus impleuerunt; diuinusque per eos sermo cotidie non solum in ecclesiis, uerum etiam per triuia, per rura praedicabatur; ita ut passim et fideles catholici firmarentur, et deprauati uiam correctionis agnoscerent. Erat illis apostolorum instar et gloria et auctoritas per conscientiam, doctrina per litteras, uirtutes ex meritis. Itaque regionis uniuersitas in eorum sententiam

prompta transierat. Latebant abditi sinistrae persuasionis auctores, et more maligni spiritus, gemebant perire sibi populos euadentes; ad extremum, diuturna meditatione concepta, praesumunt inire conflictum. Procedunt conspicui diuitiis, ueste fulgentes, circumdati adsentatione multorum; discrimenque certaminis subire maluerunt, quam in populo, quem subuerterant, pudorem taciturnitatis incurrere, ne uiderentur se ipsi silentio damnauisse. Illic plane immensa multitudo etiam cum coniugibus ac liberis excita conuenerat, aderat populus expectator, futurus et iudex, adstabant partes dispari condicione dissimiles; hinc diuina fides, inde humana praesumptio; hinc pietas, inde superbia: inde Pelagius auctor, hinc Christus. Primo in loco beatissimi sacerdotes praebuerunt aduersariis copiam disputandi, quae sola nuditate uerborum diu inaniter et aures occupauit, et tempora; deinde antistites uenerandi torrentes eloquii sui cum apostolicis et euangelicis imbribus profuderunt; miscebatur sermo proprius cum diuino, et adsertiones molestissimas lectionum testimonia sequebantur. Conuincitur uanitas, perfidia confutatur; ita ut ad singulas uerborum obiectiones errare se, dum respondere nequii, fateretur; populus arbiter uix manus continet, iudicium tamen clamore testatur.

[18] Tum subito quidam tribuniciae potestatis cum coniuge procedit in medium, filiam X annorum caecam curandam sacerdotibus offerens, quam illi aduersariis offerri praeceperunt; sed hi conscientia puniente deterriti, iungunt cum parentibus preces, et curationem paruulae a sacerdotibus deprecantur; qui inclinatos animo aduersarios intuentes, orationem breuiter fundunt, ac deinde Germanus plenus Spiritu Sancto inuocat Trinitatem; nec mora, adherentem lateri suo capsulam cum sanctorum reliquiis collo auulsam manibus comprehendit, eamque in conspectu omnium puellae oculis adplicauit, quos statim euacuatos tenebris lumen ueritatis impleuit.

Exultant parentes, miraculum populus contremescit; post quam diem ita ex animis omnium suasio iniqua deleta est, ut sacerdotum doctrinam sitientibus desideriis sectarentur.

Compressa itaque peruersitate damnabili, eiusque auctoribus confutatis, atque animis omnium fidei puritate conpositis, sacerdotes beatum Albanum martyrem, acturi Deo per ipsum gratias, petierunt, ubi Germanus omnium apostolorum diuersorumque martyrum secum reliquias habens, facta oratione, iussit reuelli sepulchrum, pretiosa ibidem munera conditurus; arbitrans opportunum, ut membra sanctorum ex diuersis regionibus collecta, quos pares meritis receperat caelum, sepulchri quoque unius teneret hospitium. Quibus depositis honorifice atque sociatis, de loco ipso, ubi beati martyris effusus erat sanguis, massam pulueris secum portaturus abstulit, in qua apparebat, cruore seruato, rubuisse martyrum aedem, persecutore pallente. Quibus ita gestis, innumera hominum eodem die ad Dominum turba conuersa est.

[19] Unde dum redeunt, insidiator inimicus, casualibus laqueis praeparatis, Germani pedem lapsus occasione contriuit, ignorans merita illius, sicut Iob beatissimi, afflictione corporis propaganda; et dum aliquandiu uno in loco

infirmatis necessitate teneretur, in uicina, qua manebat, casula exarsit incendium; quod consumtis domibus, quae illic palustri harundine tegebantur, ad eum habitaculum, in quo idem iacebat, flabris stimulantibus ferebatur.

Concursus omnium ad antistitem conuolauit, ut elatus manibus periculum, quod iminebat, euaderet; quibus increpatis moueri se fidei praesumptione non passus est. At multitudo omnis desperatione perterrita obuiam currit incendio. Sed ut Dei potentia manifestior appareret, quicquid custodire temtauerat turba, consumitur; quod uero iacens et infirmus defenderat, reserato hospitio sancti uiri, expaescens flamma transiliuit, ultra citraque desaeuiens; et inter globos flammantis incendii incolume tabernaculum, quod habitator inclusus seruabat, emicuit. Exultat turba miraculo, et uictam se diuinis uirtutibus gratulatur. Excubabat diebus ac noctibus ante tugurium pauperis uulgus sine numero; hi animas curare, hi cupientes corpora.

Referri nequeunt, quae Christus operabatur in famulo, qui uirtutes faciebat infirmus; et cum debilitati suae nihil remedii pateretur adhiberi, quadam nocte candentem niueis uestibus uidit sibi adesse personam, quae manu extensa iacentem uideretur adtollere, eumque consistere firmis uestigiis imperabat. Post quam horam ita, fugatis doloribus, recepit pristinam sanitatem, ut, die reddito, itineris laborem subiret intrepidus.

[20] Interea Saxones Pictique bellum aduersum Brettones iunctis uiribus susceperunt, quos eadem necessitas in castra contraxerat; et cum trepidi partes suas pene in pares iudicarent, sanctorum antistitem auxilium petierunt; qui promissum maturantes aduentum, tantum pauentibus fiduciae contulerunt, ut accessisse maximus crederetur exercitus. Itaque apostolicis ducibus Christus militabat in castris. Aderant etiam quadragesimae uenerabiles dies, quos religiosiores reddebat praesentia sacerdotum, in tantum, ut cotidianis praedicationibus instituti, certatim populi ad gratiam baptismatis conuolarent. Nam maxima exercitus multitudo undam lauacri salutaris expetiit, et ecclesia ad diem resurrectionis dominicae frondibus contexta conponitur, atque in expeditione campestri instar ciuitatis aptatur. Madidus baptisate procedit exercitus, fides feruet in populo, et conterriti armorum praesidio, diuinitatis expectatur auxilium. Institutio uel forma castitatis hostibus nuntiatur, qui uictoriam quasi de inermi exercitu praesumentes, adsumta alacritate festinant; quorum tamen aduentus exploratione cognoscitur.

Cumque, emensa sollemnitate paschali, recens de lauacro pars maior exercitus arma capere et bellum parare temtaret, Germanus ducem se proelii profitetur, eligit expeditos, circumiecta percurrit, et e regione, qua hostium sperabatur aduentus, uallem circumdatam mediis montibus intuetur. Quo in loco nouum conponit exercitum ipse dux agminis. Et iam aderat ferox hostium multitudo, quam adpropinquare intuebantur in insidiis constituti. Tum subito Germanus signifer uniuersos admonet, et praedicat, ut uoci suae uno clamore respondeant; securisque hostibus, qui se insperatos adesse confiderent, alleluiam tertio repetitam sacerdotes exclamabant.

Sequitur una uox omnium, et elatum clamorem repercusso aere montium

conclusa multiplicanti; hostile agmen terrore prosternitur, et super se non solum rupes circumdatas, sed etiam ipsam caeli machinam contremescunt, trepidationique iniectae uix sufficere pedum pernecitas credebatur. Passim fugiunt, arma prociunt, gaudentes uel nuda corpora eripuisse discrimini; plures etiam timore praecipites flumen, quod transierant, deuorauit. Ultionem suam innocens exercitus intuetur, et uictoriae concessae otiosus spectator efficitur. Spolia colliguntur exposita, et caelestis palmae gaudia miles religiosus amplectitur. Triumphant pontifices hostibus fuis sine sanguine; triumphant uictoria fide obtenta, non uiribus.

Composita itaque insula securitate multiplici, superatisque hostibus uel inuisibilibus, uel carne conspicuis, reditum moliuntur pontifices. Quibus tranquillam nauigationem et merita propria et intercessio beati martyris Albani parauerunt, quietosque eos suorum desideriis felix carina restituit.

[21] Nec multo interposito tempore nuntiatur ex eadem insula Pelagianam peruersitatem iterato paucis auctoribus dilatar;

rursusque ad beatissimum uirum preces sacerdotum omnium deferuntur, ut causam Dei, quam prius obtinuerat, tutaretur. Quorum petitioni festinus obtemperat. Namque adiuncto sibi Seuero, totius sanctitatis uiro, qui erat discipulus beatissimi patris Lupi Trecasenorum episcopi, et tunc Treuiris ordinatus episcopus, gentibus primae Germaniae uerbum praedicabat, mare conscendit, et consentientibus elementis, tranquillo nauigio Britannias petit. Interea sinistri spiritus peruolantes totam insulam Germanum uenire inuitis uaticinationibus nuntiabant; in tantum, ut Elafius quidam, regionis illius primus, in occursum sanctorum sine ulla manifesti nuntii relatione properaret, exhibens secum filium, quem in ipso flore adolescentiae debilitas dolenda damnauerat. Erat enim arescentibus neruis contracto poplite, cui per siccitatem cruris usus uestigii negabatur. Hunc Elafium prouincia tota subsequitur; ueniunt sacerdotes, occurrit inscia multitudo, confestim benedictio et sermonis diuini doctrina profunditur. Recognoscunt populum in ea, qua reliquerat, credulitate durantem; intellegunt culpam esse paucorum, inquirunt auctores, inuentosque condemnant. Cum subito Elafius pedibus aduoluitur sacerdotum, offerens filium, cuius necessitatem ipsa debilitas etiam sine precibus adlegebat; fit communis omnium dolor, praecipue sacerdotum, qui conceptam misericordiam ad diuinam clementiam contulerunt; statimque adolescentem beatus Germanus sedere compulit, adtrectat poplitem debilitate curuatum, et per tota infirmitatis spatia medicabilis dextera percurrit, salubremque tactum sanitas festina subsequitur.

Ariditas sucum, nerui officia receperunt, et in conspectu omnium filio incolumitas, patri filius restituitur. Implentur populi stupore miraculi, et in pectoribus omnium fides catholica inculcata firmatur. Praedicatio deinde ad plebem de praeuaricationis emendatione conuertitur, omniumque sententia prauitatis auctores, qui erant expulsi insula, sacerdotibus adducuntur ad mediterranea deferendi, ut et regio absolutione, et illi emendatione fruerentur.

Factumque est, ut in illis locis multo ex eo tempore fides intemerata

perduraret.

Itaque, conpositis omnibus, beati sacerdotes ea, qua uenerant, prosperitate redierunt. Porro Germanus post haec ad Rauennam pro pace Armoricanae gentis supplicaturus aduenit, ibique a Ualentiniano et Placidia matre ipsius summa reuerentia susceptus, migravit ad Christum. Cuius corpus honorifico agmine, comitantibus uirtutum operibus, suam defertur ad urbem. Nec multo post Ualentinianus ab Aetii patricii, quem occiderat, satellitibus interimitur, anno imperii Marciani VIo, cum quo simul Hesperium concidit regnum.

[22] Interea Britanniae cessatum quidem est parumper ab externis, sed non a ciuilibus bellis. Manebant exterminia ciuitatum ab hoste derutarum ac desertarum; pugnabant contra inuicem, qui hostem euaserant, ciues. Attamen recente adhuc memoria calamitatis et cladis inflictae seruabant utcumque reges, sacerdotes, priuati, et optimates suum quique ordinem. At illis decedentibus, cum successisset actas tempestatis illius nescia, et praesentis solum serenitatis statum experta, ita cuncta ueritatis ac iustitiae moderamina concussa ac subuersa sunt, ut earum non dicam uestigium, sed ne memoria quidem, praeter in paucis et ualde paucis ulla appareret. Qui inter alia inenarrabilem scelerum facta, quae historicus eorum Gildus flebili sermone describit, et hoc addebant, ut numquam genti Saxonum siue Anglorum, secum Britanniam incolenti, uerbum fidei praedicando committerent. Sed non tamen diuina pietas plebem suam, quam praesciuit, deseruit, quin multo digniores genti memoratae praecones ueritatis, per quos crederet, destinauit.

[23] Siquidem anno ab incarnatione Domini DLXXXII Mauricius ab Augusto LIII imperium suscipiens XX et I annis tenuit. Cuius anno regni X Gregorius, uir doctrina et actione praecipuus, pontificatum Romanae et apostolicae sedis sortitus rexit annos XIII, menses VI, et dies X. Qui diuino admonitus instinctu anno XIII eiusdem principis, aduentus uero Anglorum in Britanniam anno circiter CL, misit seruum Dei Augustinum et alios plures cum eo monachos timentes Dominum praedicare uerbum Dei genti Anglorum. Qui cum iussis pontificalibus obtemperantes memoratum opus adgredi coepissent, iamque aliquantulum itineris confecissent, perculsi timore inerti, redire domum potius, quam barbaram, feram, incredulamque gentem, cuius ne linguam quidem nossent, adire cogitabant, et hoc esse tutius communi consilio decernebant. Nec mora, Augustinum, quem eis episcopum ordinandum, si ab Anglis susciperentur, disposuerat, domum remittunt, qui a beato Gregorio humili supplicatu obtineret, ne tam periculosam, tam laboriosam, tam incertam peregrinationem adire deberent. Quibus ille exhortatorias mittens litteras, in opus eos uerbi, diuino confisos auxilio, proficisci suadet. Quarum uidelicet litterarum ista est forma:

Gregorius seruus seruorum Dei seruis Domini nostri.

Quia melius fuerat bona non incipere, quam ab his, quae coepta sunt, cogitatione retrorsum redire, summo studio, dilectissimi filii, oportet, ut opus bonum, quod auxiliante Domino coepistis, impleatis.

Nec labor uos ergo itineris, nec maledicorum hominum linguae deterreant;

sed omni instantia, omnique feruore, quae inchoastis, Deo auctore peragite; scientes, quod laborem magnum maior aeternae retributionis gloria sequitur. Remeanti autem Augustino praeposito uestro, quem et abbatem uobis constituimus, in omnibus humiliter oboedite; scientes hoc uestris animabus per omnia profuturum, quicquid a uobis fuerit in eius admonitione completum. Omnipotens Deus sua uos gratia protegat, et uestri laboris fructum in aeterna me patria uidere concedat; quatinus etsi uobiscum laborare nequeo, simul in gaudio retributionis inuemar, quia laborare scilicet uolo.

Deus uos incolumes custodiat, dilectissimi filii.

Data die X Kalendarum Augustarum, imperante domino nostro Mauricio Tiberio piissimo Augusto anno XIII, post consulatum eiusdem domini nostri anno XIII, indictione XIII.

[24] Misit etiam tunc isdem uenerandus pontifex ad Etherium Arelatensem archiepiscopum, ut Augustinum Britanniam pergentem benigne susciperet, litteras, quarum iste est textus:

Reuerentissimo et sanctissimo fratri Etherio coepiscopo Gregorius seruus seruorum Dei.

Licet apud sacerdotes habentes Deo placitam caritatem religiosi uiri nullius commendatione indigeant; quia tamen aptum scribendi se tempus ingessit, fraternitati uestrae nostra mittere scripta curauimus; insinuantes latorem praesentium Augustinum seruum Dei, de cuius certi sumus studio, cum aliis seruis Dei, illic nos pro utilitate animarum auxiliante Domino direxisse; quem necesse est, ut sacerdotali studio sanctitas uestra adiuuare, et sua ei solacia praebere festinet. Cui etiam, ut promtiores ad suffragandum possitis existere, causam uobis iniunximus subtiliter indicare; scientes quod, ea cognita, tota uos propter Deum deuotione ad solaciandum, quia res exigit, commodetis. Candidum praeterea presbyterum, communem filium, quem ad gubernationem patrimonioli ecclesiae nostrae transmisimus, caritati uestrae in omnibus commendamus. Deus te incolumem custodiat, reuerentissime frater.

Data die X Kalendarum Augustarum, imperante domino nostro Mauricio Tiberio piissimo Augusto, anno XIII, post consulatum eiusdem domini nostri anno XIII, indictione XIII.

[25] Roboratus ergo confirmatione beati patris Gregorii, Augustinus cum famulis Christi, qui erant cum eo, rediit in opus uerbi, peruenitque Britanniam. Erat eo tempore rex Aedilberct in Cantia potentissimus, qui ad confinium usque Humbrae fluminis maximi, quo meridiani et septentrionales Anglorum populi dirimuntur, fines imperii tetenderat. Est autem ad orientalem Cantiae plagam Tanatos insula non modica, id est magnitudinis iuxta consuetudinem aestimationis Anglorum, familiarum DCrum, quam a continenti terra secernit fluuius Uantsumu, qui est latitudinis circiter trium stadiorum, et duobus tantum in locis est transmeabilis; utrumque enim caput protendit in mare. In hac ergo adplicuit seruus Domini Augustinus, et socii eius, uiri, ut ferunt, ferme XL. Acceperunt autem, praecipiente beato papa Gregorio, de gente Francorum interpretes; et mittens ad Aedilberctum mandauit se uenisse de

Roma, ac nuntium ferre optimum, qui sibi obtemperantibus aeterna in caelis gaudia, et regnum sine fine cum Deo uiuo et uero futurum sine ulla dubietate promitteret. Qui, haec audiens, manere illos in ea, quam adierant, insula, et eis necessaria ministrari, donec uideret, quid eis faceret, iussit. Nam et antea fama ad eum Christianae religionis peruenerat, utpote qui et uxorem habebat Christianam de gente Francorum regia, uocabulo Bercta; quam ea condicione a parentibus acceperat, ut ritum fidei ac religionis suae cum episcopo, quem ei adiutorem fidei dederant, nomine Liudhardo, inuiolatum seruare licentiam haberet.

Post dies ergo uenit ad insulam rex, et residens sub diuo, iussit Augustinum cum sociis ad suum ibidem aduenire colloquium. Cauerat enim, ne in aliquam domum ad se introirent, uetere usus augurio, ne superuentu suo, siquid malificae artis habuissent, eum superando deciperent. At illi non daemonica, sed diuina uirtute praediti, ueniebant crucem pro uexillo ferentes argenteam, et imaginem Domini Saluatoris in tabula depictam, laetantiasque canentes pro sua simul et eorum, propter quos et ad quos uenerant, salute aeterna, Domino supplicabant. Cumque ad iussionem regis residentes uerbum ei uitae una cum omnibus, qui aderant, eius comitibus praedicarent, respondit ille dicens: ‘Pulchra sunt quidem uerba et promissa, quae adfertis;

sed quia noua sunt et incerta, non his possum adsensum tribuere, relictis eis, quae tanto tempore cum omni Anglorum gente seruauī. Uerum quia de longe huc peregrini uenistis, et, ut ego mihi uideor perspexisse, ea, quae uos uera et optima credebatis, nobis quoque communicare desiderastis, nolumus molesti esse uobis; quin potius benigno uos hospitio recipere, et, quae uictui sunt uestro necessaria, ministrare curamus; nec prohibemus, quin omnes, quos potestis, fidei uestrae religionis praedicando societis.’ Dedit ergo eis mansionem in ciuitate Doruuernensi, quae imperii sui totius erat metropolis, eisque, ut promiserat, cum administratione uictus temporalis licentiam quoque praedicandi non abstulit. Fertur autem, quia adpropinquantes ciuitati, more suo cum cruce sancta et imagine magni regis Domini nostri Iesu Christi hanc laetaniam consona uoce modularentur: ‘Deprecamur te, Domine, in omni misericordia tua, ut auferatur furor tuus et ira tua a ciuitate ista, et de domo sancta tua, quoniam peccauimus. Alleluia.’

[26] At ubi datam sibi mansionem intrauerant, coeperunt apostolicam primitiuae ecclesiae uitam imitari; orationibus uidelicet assiduis, uigiliis ac ieiuniis seruiendo, uerbum uitae, quibus poterant, praedicando, cuncta huius mundi uelut aliena spernendo, ea tantum, quae uictui necessaria uidebantur, ab eis, quos docebant, accipiendo, secundum ea, quae docebant, ipsi per omnia uiuendo, et paratum ad patiendum aduersa quaeque, uel etiam moriendum pro ea, quam praedicabant, ueritate animum habendo. Quid mora? Crediderunt nonnulli et baptizabantur, mirantes simplicitatem innocentis uitae, ac dulcedinem doctrinae eorum caelestis. Erat autem prope ipsam ciuitatem ad orientem ecclesia in honorem sancti Martini antiquitus facta, dum adhuc Romani Britanniam incolerent, in qua regina, quam Christianam

fuisse praediximus, orare consuevit. In hac ergo et ipsi primo conuenire, psallere, orare, missas facere, praedicare, et baptizare coeperunt; donec, rege ad fidem conuerso, maiorem praedicandi per omnia, et ecclesias fabricandi uel restaurandi licentiam acciperent.

At ubi ipse etiam inter alios delectatus uita mundissima sima sanctorum, et promissis eorum suauissimis, quae uera esse miraculorum quoque multorum ostensione firmauerant, credens baptizatus est, coepere plures cotidie ad audiendum uerbum confluere, ac, relicto gentilitatis ritu, unitati se sanctae Christi ecclesiae credendo sociare. Quorum fidei et conuersioni ita congratulatus esse rex perhibetur, ut nullum tamen cogeret ad Christianismum; sed tantummodo credentes artiori dilectione, quasi conciuēs sibi regni caelestis, amplecteretur. Didicerat enim a doctoribus auctoribusque suae salutis seruitium Christi uoluntarium, non coacticiū esse debere. Nec distulit, quin etiam ipsis doctoribus suis locum sedis eorum gradui congruum in Doruēni metropoli sua donaret, simul et necessarias in diuersis speciebus possessiones conferret.

[27] Interea uir Domini Augustinus uenit Arelas, et ab archiepiscopo eiusdem ciuitatis Aetherio, iuxta quod iussa sancti patris Gregorii acceperant, archiepiscopus genti Anglorum ordinatus est; reuersusque Britanniam misit continuo Roman Laurentium presbyterum et Petrum monachum, qui beato pontifici Gregorio gentem Anglorum fidem Christi suscepisse, ac se episcopum factum esse referrent; simul et de eis, quae necessariae uidebantur, quaestionibus eius consulta flagitans. Nec mora, congrua quaesitui responsa recepit; quae etiam huic historiae nostrae commodum duximus indere.

I. Interrogatio beati Augustini episcopi Cantuariorum ecclesiae: De episcopis, qualiter cum suis clericis conuersentur, uel de his, quae fidelium oblationibus accedunt altario; quantaē debeant fieri portiones et qualiter episcopus agere in ecclesia debeat?

Respondit Gregorius papa urbis Romae: Sacra scriptura testatur, quam te bene nosse dubium non est, et specialiter beati Pauli ad Timotheum epistolae, in quibus eum erudire studuit, qualiter in domo Dei conuersari debuisset. Mos autem sedis apostolicae est ordinatis episcopis praecepta tradere, ut omni stipendio, quod accedit, quattuor debeant fieri portiones; una uidelicet episcopo et familiae propter hospitalitatem atque susceptionem, alia clero, tertia pauperibus, quarta ecclesiis reparandis. Sed quia tua fraternitas monasterii regulis erudita, seorsum fieri non debet a clericis suis in ecclesia Anglorum, quae auctore Deo nuper adhuc ad fidem perducta est, hanc debet conuersationem instituere, quae initio nascentis ecclesiae fuit patribus nostris; in quibus nullus eorum ex his, quae possidebant, aliquid suum esse dicebat, sed erant eis omnia communia.

Siqui uero sunt clerici extra sacros ordines constituti, qui se continere non possunt, sortiri uxores debent, et stipendia sua exterius accipere; quia et de hisdem patribus, de quibus praefati sumus, nouimus scriptum, quod diuidebatur singulis, prout cuique opus erat. De eorum quoque stipendio

cogitandum atque prouidendum est, et sub ecclesiastica regula sunt tenendi, ut bonis moribus uiuant, et canendis psalmis inuigilent, et ab omnibus inlicitis et cor et linguam et corpus Deo auctore conseruent. Communi autem uita uiuentibus iam de faciendis portionibus, uel exhibenda hospitalitate, et adimplenda misericordia nobis quid erit loquendum?

Cum omne, quod superest, in causis piis ac religiosis erogandum est, Domino magistro omnium docente: 'Quod superest, date elemosinam, et ecce omnia munda sunt uobis.'

II. Interrogatio Augustini: Cum una sit fides, sunt ecclesiarum diuersae consuetudines, et altera consuetudo missarum in sancta Romana ecclesia, atque altera in Galliarum tenetur?

Respondit Gregorius papa: Nouit fraternitas tua Romanae ecclesiae consuetudinem, in qua se meminit nutritam. Sed mihi placet ut, siue in Romana, siue in Galliarum, seu in qualibet ecclesia aliquid inuenisti, quod plus omnipotenti Deo possit placere, sollicite eligas, et in Anglorum ecclesia, quae adhuc ad fidem noua est, institutione praecipua, quae de multis ecclesiis colligere potuisti, infundas. Non enim pro locis res, sed pro bonis rebus loca amanda sunt. Ex singulis ergo quibusque ecclesiis, quae pia, quae religiosa, quae recta sunt, elige; et haec quasi in fasciculum collecta apud Anglorum mentes in consuetudinem depone.

III. Interrogatio Augustini: Obsecro, quid pati debeat, siquis aliquid de ecclesia furtu abstulerit?

Respondit Gregorius: Hoc tua fraternitas ex persona furis pensare potest, qualiter ualeat corrigi. Sunt enim quidam, qui habentes subsidia furtum perpetrant, et sunt alii, qui hac in re ex inopia delinquant; unde necesse est, ut quidam damnis, quidam uero uerberibus, et quidam districtius, quidam autem lenius corrigantur.

Et cum paulo districtius agitur, ex caritate agendum est, et non ex furore; quia ipsi hoc praestatur, qui corrigitur, ne gehennae ignibus tradatur. Sic enim nos fidelibus tenere disciplinam debemus, sicut boni patres carnalibus filiis solent, quos et pro culpis uerberibus feriunt, et tamen ipsos, quos doloribus affligunt, habere heredes quaerunt; et quae possident, ipsis seruant, quos irati insequi uidentur. Haec ergo caritas in mente tenenda est, et ipsa modum correctionis dictat, ita ut mens extra rationis regulam omnino nihil faciat. Adde etiam, quomodo ea, quae furtu de ecclesiis abstulerint, reddere debeant. Sed absit, ut ecclesia cum augmento recipiat, quod de terrenis rebus uidetur amittere, et lucra de uanis quaerere.

III. Interrogatio Augustini: Si debeant duo germani fratres singulas sorores accipere, quae sunt ab illis longa progenie generatae?

Respondit Gregorius: Hoc fieri modis omnibus licet; nequaquam enim in sacris eloquiis inuenitur, quod huic capitulo contradicere uideatur.

V. Interrogatio Augustini: Usque ad quotam generationem fideles debeant cum propinquis sibi coniugio copulari? et nouercis et cognatis si liceat copulari coniugio?

Respondit Gregorius: Quaedam terrena lex in Romana república permittit, ut siue frater et soror, seu duorum fratrum germanorum, uel duarum sororum filius et filia misceantur. Sed experimento didicimus ex tali coniugio sobolem non posse succrescere. Et sacra lex prohibet cognationis turpitudinem reuelare. Unde necesse est, ut iam tertia uel quarta generatio fidelium licenter sibi iungi debeat;

nam secunda, quam praediximus, a se omni modo debet abstinere. Cum nouerca autem miscere graue est facinus, quia et in lege scriptum est: 'Turpitudinem patris tui non reuelabis.' Neque enim patris turpitudinem filius reuelare potest. Sed quia scriptum est: 'Erunt duo in carne una,' qui turpitudinem nouercae, quae una caro cum patre fuit, reuelare praesumserit, profecto patris turpitudinem reuelauit. Cum cognata quoque miscere prohibitum est, quia per coniunctionem priorem caro fratris fuerit facta. Pro qua re etiam Iohannes Baptista capite truncatus est, et sancto martyrio consummatus, cui non est dictum, ut Christum negaret, et pro Christi confessione occisus est; sed quia isdem Dominus noster Iesus Christus dixerat: 'Ego sum ueritas'; quia pro ueritate Iohannes occisus est, uidelicet et pro Christo sanguinem fudit.

Quia uero sunt multi in Anglorum gente, qui, dum adhuc in infidelitate essent, huic nefando coniugio dicuntur admixti, ad fidem uenientes admonendi sunt, ut se abstineant, et graue hoc esse peccatum cognoscant. Tremendum Dei iudicium timeant, ne pro carnali dilectione tormenta aeterni cruciatus incurrant. Non tamen pro hac re sacri corporis ac sanguinis Domini communionem priuandi sunt, ne in eis illa ulcisci uideantur, in quibus se per ignorantiam ante lauacrum baptismatis adstrinxerunt. In hoc enim tempore sancta ecclesia quaedam per feruorem corrigit, quaedam per mansuetudinem tolerat, quaedam per considerationem dissimulat, atque ita portat et dissimulat, ut saepe malum, quod aduersatur, portando et dissimulando conpescat. Omnes autem, qui ad fidem ueniunt, admonendi sunt, ne tale aliquid audeant perpetrare. Siqui autem perpetrauerint, corporis et sanguinis Domini communionem priuandi sunt; quia, sicut in his, qui per ignorantiam fecerunt, culpa aliquatenus toleranda est, ita in his fortiter insequenda, qui non metuunt sciendo peccare.

VI. Interrogatio Augustini: Si longinquitas itineris magna interiacet, ut episcopi non facile ualeant conuenire, an debeat sine aliorum episcoporum praesentia episcopus ordinari?

Respondit Gregorius: Et quidem in Anglorum ecclesia, in qua adhuc solus tu episcopus inueniris, ordinare episcopum non aliter nisi sine episcopis potes. Nam quando de Galliis episcopi ueniunt, qui in ordinatione episcopi testes adsistant? Sed fraternitatem tuam ita uolumus episcopos ordinare, ut ipsi sibi episcopi longo interuallo minime disiungantur, quatinus nulla sit necessitas, ut in ordinatione episcopi pastores quoque alii, quorum praesentia ualde est utilis, facile debeant conuenire. Cum igitur auctore Deo ita fuerint episcopi in propinquis sibi locis ordinati, per omnia episcoporum ordinatio sine

adgregatis tribus uel quattuor episcopis fieri non debet. Nam in ipsis rebus spiritalibus, ut sapienter et mature disponantur, exemplum trahere a rebus etiam carnalibus possumus. Certe enim dum coniugia in mundo celebrantur, coniugati quique conuocantur, ut qui in uia iam coniugii praecesserunt, in subsequentis quoque copulae gaudio misceantur. Cur non ergo et in hac spiritali ordinatione, qua per sacrum ministerium homo Deo coniungitur, tales conueniant, qui uel in prouectu ordinati episcopi gaudeant, uel pro eius custodia omnipotenti Deo preces pariter fundant?

VII. Interrogatio Augustini: Qualiter debemus cum Galliarum atque Britanniarum episcopis agere?

Respondit Gregorius: In Galliarum episcopis nullam tibi auctoritatem tribuimus; quia ab antiquis praedecessorum meorum temporibus pallium Arelatensis episcopus accepit, quem nos priuare auctoritate percepta minime debemus. Si igitur contingat, ut fraternitas tua ad Galliarum prouinciam transeat, cum eodem Arelatense episcopo debet agere, qualiter, siqua sunt in episcopis uitia, corrigantur. Qui si forte in disciplinac uigore tepidus existat, tuae fraternitatis zelo accendendus est. Cui etiam epistulas fecimus, ut cum tuae sanctitatis praesentia in Galliis, et ipse tota mente subueniat, et quae sunt Creatoris nostri iussioni contraria, ab episcoporum moribus conpescat. Ipse autem extra auctoritatem propriam episcopos Galliarum iudicare non poteris; sed suadendo, blandiendo, bona quoque opera eorum imitationi monstrando, prauorum mentes ad sanctitatis studia reforma; quia scriptum est in lege: 'Per alienam messem transiens falcem mittere non debet, sed manu spicas conterere et manducare.' Falcem enim iudicii mittere non potes in ea segete, quae alteri uidetur esse commissae; sed per affectum boni operis frumenta dominica uitiorum suorum paleis expolia, et in ecclesiae corpore monendo et persuadendo, quasi mandendo conuerte. Quicquid uero ex auctoritate agendum est, cum praedicto Arelatense episcopo agatur, ne praetermitti possit hoc, quod antiqua patrum institutio inuenit. Britanniarum uero omnes episcopos tuae fraternitati committimus, ut indocti doceantur, infirmi per uersionem roborentur, peruersi auctoritate corrigantur.

VIII. Interrogatio Augustini: Si pregnans mulier debeat baptizari?

aut postquam genuerit, post quantum tempus possit ecclesiam intrare?

aut etiam, ne morte praeoccupetur, quod genuerit, post quot dies hcc liceat sacri baptismatis sacramenta percipere? aut post quantum temporis huic uir suus possit in carnis copulatione coniungi? aut, si menstrua consuetudine tenetur, an ecclesiam intrare ei liceat, aut sacrae communionis sacramenta percipere? aut uir suae coniugi permixtus, priusquam lauatur aqua, si ecclesiam possit intrare? uel etiam ad mysterium communionis sacrae accedere? Quae omnia rudi Anglorum genti oportet haberi conperta.

Respondit Gregorius: Hoc non ambigo fraternitatem tuam esse requisitam, cui iam et responsum reddidisse me arbitror. Sed hoc, quod ipse dicere et sentire potuisti, credo, quia mea apud te uolueris responsione firmari. Mulier etenim pregnans cur non debeat baptizari, cum non sit ante omnipotentis Dei

oculos culpa aliqua fecunditas carnis? Nam cum primi parentes nostri in paradiso deliquissent, immortalitatem, quam acceperant, recto Dei iudicio perdidierunt. Quia itaque isdem omnipotens Deus humanum genus pro culpa sua funditus extinguere noluit, et immortalitatem homini pro peccato suo abstulit, et tamen pro benignitate suae pietatis fecunditatem ei subolis reservauit. Quod ergo naturae humanae ex omnipotentis Dei dono seruatum est, qua ratione poterit a sacri baptismatis gratia prohibere? In illo quippe mysterio, in quo omnis culpa funditus exstinguitur, ualde stultum est, si donum gratiae contradicere posse uideatur.

Cum uero enixa fuerit mulier, post quot dies debeat ecclesiam intrare, testamenti ueteris praeceptione didicisti, ut pro masculo diebus XXXIII, pro femina autem diebus LXVI debeat abstinere. Quod tamen sciendum est, quia in mysterio accipitur. Nam si hora eadem, qua genuerit, actura gratias intrat ecclesiam, nullo peccati pondere grauatur; uoluptas ctenim carnis, non dolor in culpa est. In carnis autem commistione uoluptas est; nam in prolis prolatione gemitus.

Unde et ipsi primae matri omnium dicitur: ‘In doloribus paries.’ Si itaque enixam mulierem prohibemus ecclesiam intrare, ipsam ei poenam suam in culpam deputamus. Baptizare autem uel enixam mulierem, uel hoc quod genuerit, si mortis periculo urguetur, uel ipsam hora eadem, qua gignit, uel hoc, quod gignitur, eadem, qua natum est, nullo modo prohibetur; quia sancti mysterii gratia, sicut uiuentibus atque discernentibus cum magna discretione prouidenda est; ita his, quibus mors imminet, sine ulla dilatione offerenda; ne dum adhuc tempus ad praebendum redemptionis mysterium quaeritur, interueniente paululum mora, inueniri non ualeat, qui redimatur.

Ad eius uero concubitus uir suus accedere non debet, quoadusque, qui gignitur, ablactatur Praua autem in coniugatorum moribus consuetudo surrexit, ut mulieres filios, quos gignunt, nutrire contemnant, eosque aliis mulieribus ad nutriendum tradant, quod uidelicet ex sola causa incontinentiae uidetur inuentum; quia, dum se continere nolunt, despiciunt lactare, quos gignunt. Hae itaque, quae filios suos ex praua consuetudine aliis ad nutriendum tradunt, nisi purgationis tempus transierit, uiris suis non debent admisceri;

quippe quia et sine partus causa, cum in suetis menstruis detinentur, uiris suis misceri prohibentur; ita ut morte lex sacra feriat, si quis uir ad menstruatam mulierem accedat. Quae tamen mulier, dum consuetudinem menstruam patitur, prohiberi ecclesiam intrare non debet, quia ei naturae superfluitas in culpam non ualet reputari; et per hoc, quod inuita patitur, iustum non est, ut ingressu ecclesiae priuetur. Nouimus namque, quod mulier, quae fluxum patiebatur sanguinis, post tergum Domini humiliter ueniens uestimenti eius fimbriam tetigit, atque ab ea statim sua infirmitas recessit. Si ergo in fluxu sanguinis posita laudabiliter potuit Domini uestimentum tangere, cur, quae menstruam sanguinis patitur, ei non liceat Domini ecclesiam intrare? Sed dices: Illam infirmitas conpulsit; has uero, de quibus loquimur, consuetudo

constringit.

Perpende autem, frater carissime, quia omne, quod in hac mortali carne patimur ex infirmitate naturae, est digno Dei iudicio post culpam ordinatum. Esurire namque, sitire, aestuare, algere, lassescere ex infirmitate naturae est. Et quid est aliud contra famem alimenta, contra sitim potum, contra aestum auras, contra frigus uestem, contra lassitudinem requiem quaerere, nisi medicamentum quidem contra egritudines explorare? Feminae itaque et menstruus sui sanguinis fluxus egritudo est. Si igitur bene praesumsit, quae uestimentum Domini in langore posita tetigit, quod uni personae infirmanti conceditur, cur non concedatur cunctis mulieribus, quae naturae suae uitio infirmantur?

Sanctae autem communionis mysterium in eisdem diebus percipere non debet prohiberi. Si autem ex ueneratione magna percipere non praesumit, laudanda est; sed si perceperit, non iudicanda. Bonarum quippe mentium est, et ibi aliquo modo culpas suas agnoscere, ubi culpa non est; quia saepe sine culpa agitur, quod uenit ex culpa;

unde etiam cum esurimus, sine culpa comedimus, quibus ex culpa primi hominis factum est, ut esuriamus. Menstrua enim consuetudo mulieribus non aliqua culpa est, uidelicet quae naturaliter accedit.

Sed tamen quod natura ipsa ita uitata est, ut etiam sine uoluntatis studio uideatur esse polluta, ex culpa uenit uitium, in quo se ipsa, qualis per iudicium facta sit, humana natura cognoscat. Et homo, qui culpam sponte perpetravit, reatum culpae portet inuitus. Atque ideo feminae cum semet ipsis considerent, et si in menstrua consuetudine ad sacramentum dominici corporis et sanguinis accedere non praesumant, de sua recta consideratione laudandae sunt; dum uero percipiendo ex religiosae uitae consuetudine eiusdem mysterii amore rapiuntur, reprimendae, sicut praediximus, non sunt. Sicut enim in testamento ueteri exteriora opera obseruantur, ita in testamento nouo non tam, quod exterius agitur, quam id, quod interius cogitatur, sollicita intentione adtenditur, ut subtili sententia puniatur. Nam cum multa lex uelut immunda manducare prohibeat, in euangelio tamen Dominus dicit: 'Non quod intrat in os, coinquinat hominem; sed quae exeunt de ore, illa sunt, quae coinquinant hominem.' Atque paulo post subiicit exponens: 'Ex corde exeunt cogitationes malae.' Ubi ubertim indicatum est, quia illud ab omnipotente Deo pollutum esse in opere ostenditur, quod ex pollutae cogitationis radice generatur. Unde Paulus quoque apostolus dicit: 'Omnia munda mundis, coinquinatis autem et infidelibus nihil est mundum.' Atque mox eiusdem causam coinquinationis adnuntians subiungit: 'Coinquinata sunt enim et mens eorum et conscientia.' Si ergo ei cibus immundus non est, cui mens immunda non fuerit; cur, quod munda mente mulier ex natura patitur, ei in immunditiam reputetur?

Uir autem cum propria coniuge dormiens, nisi lotus aqua, intrare ecclesiam non debet; sed neque lotus intrare statim debet. Lex autem ueteri populo praecepit, ut mixtus uir mulieri, et lauari aqua debeat, et ante solis occasum ecclesiam non intrare; quod tamen intellegi spiritaliter potest. Quia mulieri uir

miscetur, quando illicitae concupiscentiae animus in cogitatione per delectationem coniungitur; quia, nisi prius ignis concupiscentiae a mente deferueat, dignum se congregationi fratrum aestimare non debet, qui se grauari per nequitiam prauae uoluntatis uidet. Quamuis de hac re diuersae hominum nationes diuersa sentiant, atque alia custodire uideantur, Romanorum tamen semper ab antiquioribus usus fuit, post amixtionem propriae coniugis, et lauacri purificationem quaerere, et ab ingressu ecclesiae paululum reuerenter abstinere. Nec haec dicentes culpam deputamus esse coniugium; sed quia ipsa licita amixtio coniugis sine uoluntate carnis fieri non potest, a sacri loci ingressu abstinendum est; quia uoluntas ipsa esse sine culpa nullatenus potest. Non enim de adulterio uel fornicatione, sed de legitimo coniugio natus fuerat, qui dicebat: ‘Ecce enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum, et in delictis peperit me mater mea.’

Qui enim in iniquitatibus conceptum se nouerat, a delicto se natum gemebat; quia portat in ramo umorem uitii, quem traxit ex radice. In quibus tamen uerbis non amixtionem coniugum iniquitatem nominat, sed ipsam uidelicet uoluntatem amixtionis. Sunt etenim multa, quae licita ac legitima, et tamen in eorum actu aliquatenus fedamur;

sicut saepe irascendo culpas insequimur, et tranquillitatem in nobis animi perturbamus; et cum rectum sit, quod agitur, non est tamen adprobabile, quod in eo animus perturbatur. Contra uitia quippe delinquentium iratus fuerat, qui dicebat: ‘Turbatus est prae ira oculus meus.’ Quia enim non ualeat nisi tranquilla mens in contemplationis se lucem suspendere, in ira suum oculum turbatum dolebat; quia, dum male acta deorsum insequitur, confundi atque turbari a summorum contemplatione cogeatur. Et laudabilis ergo est ira contra uitium, et tamen molesta, qua turbatum se aliquem reatum incurrisse aestimabat. Oportet itaque legitimam carnis copulam, ut causa prolis sit, non uoluntatis; et carnis commixtio creandorum liberorum sit gratia, non satisfactio uitiorum. Siquis uero suam coniugem non cupidine uoluptatis raptus, sed solummodo creandorum liberorum gratia utitur, iste profecto siue de ingressu ecclesiae, seu de sumendo dominici corporis sanguisque mysterio, suo est iudicio relinquendus; quia a nobis prohiberi non debet accipere, qui in igne positus nescit ardere. Cum uero non amor ortandi subolis, sed uoluntas dominatur in opere commixtionis, habent coniuges etiam de sua commixtione, quod defleant. Hoc enim eis concedit sancta praedicatio, et tamen de ipsa concessione metu animum concutit. Nam cum Paulus apostolus diceret: ‘Qui se continere non potest, habeat uxorem suam,’ statim subiungere curauit: ‘Hoc autem dico secundum indulgentiam, non secundum imperium.’ Non enim indulgetur, quod licet, quia iustum est. Quod igitur indulgere dixit, culpam esse demonstrauit.

Uigilanti uero mente pensandum est, quod in Sina monte Dominus ad populum locuturus prius eundem populum abstinere a mulieribus praecipit. Et si illic, ubi Dominus per creaturam subditam hominibus loquebatur, tanta prouisione est munditia corporis requisita, ut, qui uerba Dei perciperent,

mulieribus mixti non essent: quanto magis mulieres, quae corpus Domini omnipotentis accipiunt, custodire in se munditiam carnis debent, ne ipsa inaeestimabilis mystrii magnitudine grauentur? Hinc etiam ad Dauid de pueris suis per sacerdotem dicitur, ut si a mulieribus mundi essent, panes propositionis acciperent, quos omnino non acciperent, nisi prius mundos eos Dauid a mulieribus fateretur. Tunc autem uir, qui post amixtionem coniugis lotus aqua fuerit, etiam sacrae communionis mysterium ualet accipere, cum ei iuxta praefinitam sententiam etiam ecclesiam licuerit intrare.

VIII. Interrogatio Augustini: Si post inlusionem, quae per somnium solet accedere, uel corpus Domini quislibet accipere ualeat: uel, si sacerdos sit, sacra mysteria celebrare?

Respondit Gregorius: Hunc quidem testamentum ueteris legis, sicut in superiori capitulo iam diximus, pollutum dicit, et nisi lotum aqua ei usque ad uesperum intrare ecclesiam non concedit. Quod tamen aliter populus spiritalis intellegens sub eodem intellectu accipiet, quo praefati sumus; quia quasi per somnium inluditur, qui temptatus inmunditia, ueris imaginibus in cogitatione inquinatur; sed lauandus est aqua, ut culpas cogitationis lacrimis abluat; et nisi prius ignis temptationis reciderit, reum se quasi usque ad uesperum cognoscat. Sed est in eadem inlusione ualde necessaria discretio, quae subtiliter pensari debet, ex qua re accedat menti dormientis;

aliquando enim ex crapula, aliquando ex naturae superfluitate uel infirmitate, aliquando ex cogitatione contingit. Et quidem cum ex naturae superfluitate uel infirmitate euenerit, omnimodo haec inlusio non est timenda; quia hanc animum nescientem pertulisse magis dolendum est, quam fecisse. Cum uero ultra modum appetitus gulae in sumendis alimentis rapitur, atque idcirco umorum receptacula grauantur, habet exinde animus aliquem reatum, non tamen usque ad prohibitionem percipiendi sancti mystrii uel missarum sollemnia celebrandi; cum fortasse aut festus dies exigit, aut exhiberi mysterium (pro eo, quod sacerdos alius in loco deest) ipsa necessitas compellit. Nam si adsunt alii, qui implere ministerium ualeant, inlusio pro crapula facta a perceptione sacri mystrii prohibere non debet; sed ab immolatione sacri mystrii abstinere, ut arbitror, humiliter debet; si tamen dormientis mentem turpi imaginatione non concusserit. Nam sunt, quibus ita plerumque inlusio nascitur, ut eorum animus, etiam in somno corporis positus, turpibus imaginationibus non fedetur. Qua in re unum ibi ostenditur ipsa mens rea, non tamen uel suo iudicio libera, cum se, etsi dormienti corpore, nihil meminit uidisse, tamen in uigiliis corporis meminit in ingluuiem cecidisse. Sin uero ex turpi cogitatione uigilantis oritur inlusio dormientis, patet animo reatus suus; uidet enim, a qua radice inquinatio illa processerit, quia, quod cogitauit sciens, hoc pertulit nesciens. Sed pensandum est, ipsa cogitatio utrum suggestionem an delectationem, uel, quod maius est, peccati consensu acciderit. Tribus enim modis impletur omne peccatum, uidelicet suggestionem, delectationem, consensum. Suggestio quippe fit per diabolum, delectatio per carnem, consensus per spiritum; quia et primam culpam serpens suggestit,

Eua uelut caro delectata est, Adam uero uelut spiritus consensit; et necessaria est magna discretio, ut inter suggestionem atque delectationem, inter delectationem et consensum iudex sui animus praesideat. Cum enim malignus spiritus peccatum suggerit in mente, si nulla peccati delectatio sequatur, peccatum omnimodo perpetratum non est; cum uero delectare caro coeperit, tunc peccatum incipit nasci; si autem etiam ex deliberatione consentit, tunc peccatum cognoscitur perfici. In suggestionem igitur peccati semen est, in delectatione fit nutrimentum, in consensu perfectio. Et saepe contingit, ut hoc, quod malignus spiritus seminat in cogitatione, caro in delectationem trahat; nec tamen anima eidem delectationi consentiat. Et cum caro delectare sine animo nequeat, ipse tamen animus carnis uoluptatibus reluctans, in delectatione carnali aliquo modo ligatur inuitus, ut ei ex ratione contradicat, ne consentiat; et tamen delectatione ligatus sit, sed ligatum se uehementer ingemiscat. Unde et ille caelestis exercitus praecipuus miles gemebat dicens: 'Uideo aliam legem in membris meis repugnantem legi mentis meae et captiuum me ducentem in lege peccati, quae est in membris meis.' Si autem captiuus erat, minimè pugnabat; sed et pugnabat; quapropter et captiuus erat, et pugnabat igitur legi mentis, cui lex, quae in membris est, repugnabat. Si autem pugnabat, captiuus non erat. Ecce itaque homo est, ut ita dixerim, captiuus et liber; liber ex iustitia, quam diligit, captiuus ex delectatione, quam portat inuitus.

[28] Hucusque responsiones beati papae Gregorii ad consulta reuerentissimi antistitis Augustini. Epistolam uero, quam se Arelatensi episcopo fecisse commemorat, ad Uergilium Aetherii successorem dederat; cuius haec forma est:

'Reuerentissimo et sanctissimo fratri Uergilio coepiscopo Gregorius seruus seruorum Dei.

Quantus sit affectus uenientibus sponte fratribus inpendendus, ex eo, quod plerumque solent caritatis causa inuitari, cognoscitur. Et ideo, si communem fratrem Augustinum episcopum ad uos uenire contigerit, ita illum dilectio uestra, sicut decet, affectuose dulciterque suscipiat, ut et ipsum consolationis suae bono refoueat, et alios, qualiter fraterna caritas colenda sit, doceat. Et quoniam sapius euenit, ut hi, qui longe sunt positi, prius ab aliis, quae sunt emendanda, cognoscant; siquas fortasse fraternitati uestrae sacerdotum uel aliorum culpas intulerit, una cum eo residentes subtili cuncta inuestigatione perquirite, et ita uos in ea, quae Deum offendunt, et ad iracundiam prouocant, districtos ac sollicitos exhibete, ut ad aliorum emendationem et uindicta culpabilem feriat, et innocentem falsa opinio non affligat. Deus te incolumem custodiat, reuerentissime frater.

Data die X Kalendarum Iuliarum, imperante domino nostro Mauricio Tiberio piissimo Augusto anno XIX, post consulatum eiusdem domini anno XVIII, indictione III.'

[29] Praeterea idem papa Gregorius Augustino episcopo, quia suggesserat ei multam quidem sibi esse messem, sed operarios paucos, misit cum praefatis

legatariis suis plures cooperatores ac uerbi ministros; in quibus primi et praecipui erant Mellitus, Iustus, Paulinus, Rufinianus; et per eos generaliter uniuersa, quae ad cultum erant ac ministerium ecclesiae necessaria, uasa uidelicet sacra, et uestimenta altarium, ornamenta quoque ecclesiarum, et sacerdotalia uel clericilia indumenta, sanctorum etiam apostolorum ac martyrum reliquias, nec non et codices plurimos. Misit etiam litteras, in quibus significat se ei pallium direxisse, simul et insinuat, qualiter episcopos in Brittania constituere debuisset;

quarum litterarum iste est textus: ‘Reuerentissimo et sanctissimo fratri Augustino coepiscopo Gregorius seruus seruorum Dei.

Cum certum sit pro omnipotente Deo laborantibus ineffabilia aeterni regni praemia reseruari; nobis tamen eis necesse est honorum beneficia tribuere, ut in spiritalis operis studio ex remuneratione ualcant multiplicius insudare. Et quia noua Anglorum ecclesia ad omnipotentis Dei gratiam eodem Domino largiente, et te laborante perducta est, usum tibi pallii in ea ad sola missarum sollemnia agenda concedimus, ita ut per loca singula XII episcopos ordines, qui tuae subiaceant ditioni, quatinus Lundoniensis ciuitatis episcopus semper in posterum a synodo propria debeat consecrari, atque honoris pallium ab hac sancta et apostolica, cui Deo auctore descruio, sedc percipiat. Ad Eburacam uero ciuitatem te uolumus episcopum mittere, quem ipse iudicaucris ordinare; ita duntaxat, ut, si eadem ciuitas cum finitimis locis uerbum Dei receperit, ipse quoque XII episcopos ordinet, et metropolitani honore perfruatur;

quia ei quoque, si uita comes fuerit, pallium tribuere Domino fauente disponimus, quem tamen tuae fraternitatis uolumus dispositioni subiacere; post obitum uero tuum ita episcopis, quos ordinauerit, praesit, ut Lundoniensis episcopi nullo modo ditioni subiaceat. Sit uero inter Lundoniae et Eburacae ciuitatis episcopos in posterum honoris ista distinctio, ut ipse prior habeatur, qui prius fuerit ordinatus; communi autem consilio, et concordii actione quaeque sunt pro Christi zelo agenda disponant unanimiter; recte sentiant, et ea, quae senserint, non sibimet discrepando perficiant.

Tua uero fraternitas non solum eos episcopos, quos ordinauerit, neque hos tantummodo, qui per Eburacae episcopum fuerint ordinati, sed etiam omnes Britanniae sacerdotes habeat Deo Domino nostro Iesu Christo auctore subiectos; quatinus ex lingua et uita tuae sanctitatis et recte credendi, et bene uiuendi formam percipiant, atque officium suum fide ac moribus exsequentes, ad caelestia, cum Dominus uoluerit, regna pertingant. Deus te incolumem custodiat, reuerentissime frater.

Data die X. Kalendarum Iuliarum, imperante domino nostro Mauricio Tiberio piissimo Augusto anno XVIII, post consulatum eiusdem domini anno XVIII, indictione III.

[30] Abeuntibus autem praefatis legatariis, misit post eos beatus pater Gregorius litteras memoratu dignas, in quibus aperte, quam studiose erga saluationem nostrae gentis inuigilauerit, ostendit, ita scribens:

‘Dilectissimo filio Mellito abbati Gregorius seruus seruorum Dei.

Post discessum congregationis nostrae, quae tecum est, ualde sumus suspensi reddit, quia nihil de prosperitate uestri itineris audisse nos contigit. Cum ergo Deus omnipotens uos ad reuerentissimum uirum fratrem nostrum Augustinum episcopum perduxerit, dicite ei, quid diu mecum de causa Anglorum cogitans tractauit; uidelicet, quia fana idolorum destruere in eadem gente minime debeant; sed ipsa, quae in eis sunt, idola destruantur; aqua benedicta fiat, in eisdem fanis aspergatur, altaria construantur, reliquiae ponantur. Quia, si fana eadem bene constructa sunt, necesse est, ut a cultu daemonum in obsequio ueri Dei debeant commutari; ut dum gens ipsa eadem fana sua non uidet destruere, de corde errorem deponat, et Deum uerum cognoscens ac adorans, ad loca, quae consueuit, familiariter concurrat. Et quia boues solent in sacrificio daemonum multos occidere, debet eis etiam hac de re aliqua sollemnitas immutari; ut die dedicationis, uel natalicii sanctorum martyrum, quorum illic reliquiae ponuntur, tabernacula sibi circa easdem ecclesias, quae ex fanis commutatae sunt, de ramis arborum faciant, et religiosi conuiuia sollemnitatem celebrent; nec diabolo iam animalia immolent, et ad laudem Dei in esu suo animalia occidant, et donatori omnium de satietate sua gratias referant; ut dum eis aliqua exterius gaudia reseruantur, ad interiora gaudia consentire facilius ualeant.

Nam duris mentibus simul omnia abscidere impossibile esse non dubium est, quia et is, qui summum locum ascendere nititur, gradibus uel passibus, non autem saltibus eleuatur. Sic Israelitico populo in Aegypto Dominus se quidem innotuit; sed tamen eis sacrificiorum usus, quae diabolo solebat exhibere, in culto proprio reseruauit, ut eis in suo sacrificio animalia immolare praeciperet; quatinus cor mutantes, aliud de sacrificio amitterent, aliud retinerent; ut etsi ipsa essent animalia, quae offerre consueuerant, uero tamen Deo haec et non idolis immolantes, iam sacrificia ipsa non essent. Haec igitur dilectionem tuam praedicto fratri necesse est dicere, ut ipse in praesenti illic positus perpendat, qualiter omnia debeat dispensare. Deus te incolumem custodiat, dilectissime fili.

Data die XV. Kalendarum Iuliarum, imperante domino nostro Mauricio Tiberio piissimo Augusto anno XIX, post consulatum eiusdem domini anno XVIII, indictione III.

[31] Quo in tempore misit etiam Augustino epistolam super miraculis, quae per eum facta esse cognouerat, in qua eum, ne per illorum copiam periculum elationis incurreret, his uerbis hortatur:

Scio, frater carissime, quia omnipotens Deus per dilectionem tuam in gentem, quam eligi uoluit, magna miracula ostendit; unde necesse est, ut de eodem dono caelesti et timendo gaudeas, et gaudento pertimescas. Gaudeas uidelicet, quia Anglorum animae per exteriora miracula ad interioram gratiam pertrahuntur; pertimescas uero, ne inter signa, quae fiunt, infirmus animus in sui praesumptione se eleuet, et unde foras in honorem tollitur, inde per inanem gloriam intus cadat. Meminisse etenim debemus, quia discipuli cum gaudio a praedicatione redeuntes, dum caelesti magistro dicerent: ‘Domine, in nomine

tuo etiam daemonia nobis subiecta sunt,’ protinus audierunt: ‘Nolite gaudere super hoc, sed potius gaudete, quia nomina uestra scripta sunt in caelo.’ In priuata enim et temporali laetitia mentem posuerant, qui de miraculis gaudebant; sed de priuata ad communem, de temporali ad aeternam laetitiam reuocantur, quibus dicitur: ‘In hoc gaudete, quia nomina uestra scripta sunt in caelo.’ Non enim omnes electi miracula faciunt, sed tamen eorum nomina omnium in caelo tenentur adscripta. Ueritatis etenim discipulis esse gaudium non debet, nisi de eo bono, quod commune cum omnibus habent, et in quo finem laetitiae non habent.

Restat itaque, frater carissime, ut inter ea, quae operante Domino exterius facis, semper te interius subtiliter iudices ac subtiliter intellegas et temet ipsum quis sis, et quanta sit in eadem gente gratia, pro cuius conuersione etiam faciendorum signorum dona percepisti. Et si quando te Creatori nostro seu per linguam, siue per operam reminisceris deliquisse, semper haec ad memoriam reuoces, ut surgentem cordis gloriam memoria reatus premat. Et quicquid de faciendis signis acceperis, uel accepisti, haec non tibi, sed illis deputes donata, pro quorum tibi salute collata sunt.

[32] Misit idem beatus papa Gregorius eodem tempore etiam regi Aedilbercto epistulam, simul et dona in diuersis speciebus perplura;

temporalibus quoque honoribus regem glorificare satagens, cui gloriae caelestis suo labore et industria notitiam prouenisse gaudebat. Exemplar autem praefatae epistulae hoc est:

Domino gloriosissimo atque praecellentissimo filio Aedilbercto regi Anglorum Gregorius episcopus.

Propter hoc omnipotens Deus bonos quosque ad populorum regimina perducit, ut per eos omnibus, quibus praelati fuerint, dona suae pictatis impendat. Quod in Anglorum gente factum cognouimus, cui uestra gloria idcirco est praeposita, ut per bona, quae uobis concessa sunt, etiam subiectae uobis genti superna beneficia praestarentur. Et ideo, gloriose fili, eam, quam accepisti diuinitus gratiam, sollicita mente custodi, Christianam fidem in populis tibi subditis extendere festina, zelum rectitudinis tuae in eorum conuersione multiplica, idolorum cultus insequere, fanorum aedificia euerte, subditorum mores ex magna uitae munditia, exhortando, terrendo, blandiendo, corrigendo, et boni operis exempla monstrando aedifica; ut illum retributorem inuenias in caelo, cuius nomen atque cognitionem dilataueris in terra. Ipse enim uestrae quoque gloriae nomen etiam posteris gloriosius reddet, cuius uos honorem quaeritis et seruatis in gentibus.

Sic etenim Constantinus quondam piissimus imperator Romanam rempublicam a peruersis idolorum cultibus reuocans omnipotenti Deo Domino nostro Iesu Christo secum subdidit, seque cum subiectis populis tota ad eum mente conuertit. Unde factum est, ut antiquorum principum nomen suis uir ille laudibus uinceret, et tanto in opinione praecessores suos, quanto et in bono opere superaret. Et nunc itaque uestra gloria cognitionem unius Dei, Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti, regibus ac populis sibimet subiectis festinet

infundere, ut et antiquos gentis suae reges laudibus ac meritis transeat, et quanto in subiectis suis etiam aliena peccata deteraserit, tanto etiam de peccatis propriis ante omnipotentis Dei terribile examen securior fiat.

Reuerentissimus frater noster Augustinus episcopus in monasterii regula edoctus, sacrae scripturae scientia repletus, bonis auctore Deo operibus praeditus, quaeque uos ammonet, libenter audite, deuote peragite, studiose in memoria reseruate; quia, si uos eum in eo, quod pro omnipotente Deo loquitur, auditis, isdem omnipotens Deus hunc pro uobis exorantem celerius exaudit. Si enim, quod absit, uerba eius postponitis, quando eum omnipotens Deus poterit audire pro uobis, quem uos neglegitis audire pro Deo? Tota igitur mente cum eo uos in feruore fidei stringite, atque adnsum illius uirtute, quam uobis diuinitas tribuit, adiuuate, ut regni sui uos ipse faciat esse participes, cuius uos fidem in regno uestro recipi facitis et custodiri.

Praeterea scire uestram gloriam uolumus, quia, sicut in scriptura sacra ex uerbis Domini omnipotentis agnoscimus, praesentis mundi iam terminus iuxta est, et sanctorum regnum uenturum est, quod nullo umquam poterit fine terminari. Adpropinquante autem eodem mundi termino, multa inminent, quae antea non fuerunt; uidelicet immutationes aeris, terroresque de caelo, et contra ordinationem temporum tempestates, bella, fames, pestilentiae, terrae motus per loca; quae tamen non omnia nostris diebus uentura sunt, sed post nostros dies omnia subsequuntur. Uos itaque, si qua ex his euenire in terra uestra cognoscitis, nullo modo uestrum animum perturbetis;

quia idcirco haec signa de fine saeculi praemittuntur, ut de animabus nostris debeamus esse solliciti, de mortis hora suspecti, et uenturo Iudici in bonis actibus inueniamur esse praeparati. Haec nunc, gloriose fili, paucis locutus sum, ut cum Christiana fides in regno uestro excreuerit, nostra quoque apud uos locutio latior excrescat, et tanto plus loqui libeat, quanto se in mente nostra gaudia de gentis uestrae perfecta conuersione multiplicant.

Parua autem exenia transmisi, quae uobis parua non erunt, cum a uobis ex beati Petri apostoli fuerint benedictione suscepta.

Omnipotens itaque Deus in uobis gratiam suam, quam coepit, perficiat, atque uitam uestram et hic per multorum annorum curricula extendat, et post longa tempora in caelestis uos patriae congregatione recipiat. Incolumem excellentiam uestram gratia superna custodiat, domine fili.

Data die X. Kalendarum Iuliarum, imperante domino nostro Mauricio Tiberio piissimo Augusto anno XVIII, post consulatum eiusdem domini anno XVIII, indictione III.

[33] At Augustinus, ubi in regia ciuitate sedem episcopalem, ut praediximus, accepit, recuperauit in ea, regio fultus adminiculo, ecclesiam, quam inibi antiquo Romanorum fidelium opere factam fuisse didicerat, et eam in nomine sancti Saluatoris Dei et Domini nostri Iesu Christi sacrauit, atque ibidem sibi habitationem statuit et cunctis successoribus suis. Fecit autem et monasterium non longe ab ipsa ciuitate ad orientem, in quo, eius hortatu, Aedilberct ecclesiam beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli a fundamentis construxit, ac

diuersis donis ditauit, in qua et ipsius Augustini, et omnium episcoporum Doruuernensium, simul et regum Cantiae poni corpora possent. Quam tamen ecclesiam non ipse Augustinus, sed successor eius Laurentius consecrauit.

Primus autem eiusdem monasterii abbas Petrus presbiter fuit, qui legatus Galliam missus demersus est in sinu maris, qui uocatur Amflea, et ab incolis loci ignobili traditus sepulturae; sed omnipotens Deus ut, qualis meriti uir fuerit, demonstraret, omni nocte supra sepulchrum eius lux caelestis apparuit, donec animaduertentes uicini, qui uidebant, sanctum fuisse uirum, qui ibi esset sepultus, et inuestigantes, unde uel quis esset, abstulerunt corpus, et in Bononia ciuitate iuxta honorem tanto uiro congruum in ecclesia posuerunt.

[34] His temporibus regno Nordanhymbrorum praefuit rex fortissimus et gloriae cupidissimus Aedilfrid, qui plus omnibus Anglorum primatibus gentem uastauit Brettonum; ita ut Sauli quondam regi Israeliticae gentis comparandus uideretur, excepto dumtaxat hoc, quod diuinae erat religionis ignarus. Nemo enim in tribunis, nemo in regibus plures eorum terras, exterminatis uel subiugatis indigenis, aut tributarias genti Anglorum, aut habitabiles fecit. Cui merito poterat illud, quod benedicens filium patriarcha in personam Saulis dicebat, aptari: ‘Beniamin lupus rapax, mane comedet praedam et uespere diuidet spolia.’

Unde motus eius profectibus Aedan rex Scottorum, qui Britanniam inhabitant, uenit contra eum cum inmenso ac forti exercitu; sed cum paucis uictus aufugit. Siquidem in loco celeberrimo, qui dicitur Degsastann, id est Degsa lapis, omnis pene eius est caesus exercitus. In qua etiam pugna Theodbald frater Aedilfridi cum omni illo, quem ipse ducebat, exercitu peremptus est. Quod uidelicet bellum Aedilfrid anno ab incarnatione Domini DCIII, regni autem sui, quod XX et IIII annis tenuit, anno XI, perfecit; porro anno Focatis, qui tum Romani regni apicem tenebat, primo. Neque ex eo tempore quisquam regum Scottorum in Brittania aduersus gentem Anglorum usque ad hanc diem in proelium uenire audebat.

LIBER SECUNDUS.

[1] His temporibus, id est anno dominicae incarnationis DCV, beatus papa Gregorius, postquam sedem Romanae et apostolicae ecclesiae XIII annos, menses VI, et dies X gloriosissime rexit, defunctus est, atque ad aeternam regni caelestis sedem translatus.

De quo nos conuenit, quia nostram, id est Anglorum, gentem de potestate Satanae ad fidem Christi sua industria conuertit, latiore in nostra historia ecclesiastica facere sermonem, quem recte nostrum appellare possumus et debemus apostolum. Quia, cum primum in toto orbe gereret pontificatum, et conuersis iam dudum ad fidem ueritatis esset praelatus ecclesiis, nostram gentem eatenus idolis mancipatam Christi fecit ecclesiam, ita ut apostolicum illum de eo liceat nobis proferre sermonem: quia etsi aliis non est apostolus, sed tamen nobis est; nam signaculum apostolatus eius nos sumus in Domino.

Erat autem natione Romanus, a patre Gordiano, genus a proauis non solum nobile, sed et religiosum ducens. Denique Felix eiusdem apostolicae sedis quondam episcopus, uir magnae gloriae in Christo et ecclesia, eius fuit atauus. Sed ipse nobilitatem religionis non minore quam parentes et cognati uirtute deuotionis exercuit.

Nobilitatem uero illam, quam ad saeculum uidebatur habere, totam ad nanciscendam supernae gloriae dignitatis diuina gratia largiente conuertit. Nam mutato repente habitu saeculari monasterium petiit, in quo tanta perfectionis gratia coepit conuersari, ut, sicut ipse postea flendo solebat adtestari, animo illius labentia cuncta subteressent, ut rebus omnibus, quae uoluuntur, emineret, ut nulla nisi caelestia cogitare soleret, ut etiam retentus corpore ipsa iam carnis claustra contemplatione transiret, ut mortem quoque, quae pene cunctis poena est, uidelicet ut ingressum uitae, et laboris sui praemium amaret. Haec autem ipse de se, non profectum iactando uirtutum, sed deflendo potius defectum, quem sibi per curam pastorem incurrisse uidebatur, referre consuebat. Denique tempore quodam secreto, cum diacono suo Petro conloquens, enumeratis animi sui uirtutibus priscis, mox dolendo subiunxit: 'At nunc ex occasione curae pastoralis saecularium hominum negotia patitur, et post tam pulchram quietis suae speciem terreni actus puluere fedatur. Cumque se pro condescensione multorum ad exteriora sparserit, etiam cum interiora appetit, ad haec procul dubio minor redit. Perpendo itaque, quid tolero, perpendo, quid amisi; dumque intueor illud, quod perdidici, fit hoc grauius, quod porto.'

Haec quidem sanctus uir ex magnae humilitatis intentione dicebat;

sed nos credere decet nihil eum monasticae perfectionis perdidisse occasione curae pastoralis, immo potius tunc summis profectum de labore conuersionis multorum, quam de propriae quondam quiete conuersionis habuerat; maxime quia et pontificali functus officio domum suam monasterium facere curauit; et dum primo de monasterio abstractus, ad

ministerium altaris ordinatus, atque Constantinopolim apocrisarius ab apostolica sede directus est, non tamen in terreno conuersatus palatio propositum uitae caelestis intermisit. Nam quosdam fratrum ex monasterio suo, qui eum gratia germanae caritatis ad regiam urbem secuti sunt, in tutamentum coepit obseruantiae regularis habere; uidelicet ut eorum semper exemplo, sicut ipse scribit, ad orationis placidum litus, quasi anchorae fune restringeretur, cum incessabili causarum saecularium impulsu fluctuaret, concussamque saeculi actibus mentem inter eos cotidie per studiosae lectionis roboraret alloquium. Horum ergo consortio non solum a terrenis est munitus incursibus, uerum etiam ad caelestis exercitia uitae magis magisque succensus.

Nam hortati sunt eum, ut librum beati Iob magnis inuolutum obscuritatibus mystica interpretatione discuteret; neque negare potuit opus, quod sibi fraternus amor multis utile futurum inponebat. Sed eundem librum, quomodo iuxta litteram intellegendus, qualiter ad Christi et ecclesiae sacramenta referendus, quo sensu unicuique fidelium sit aptandus, per XXX et V libros expositionis miranda ratione perdocuit. Quod uidelicet opus in regia quidem urbe apocrisarius inchoauit, Romae autem iam pontifex factus expleuit.

Qui cum adhuc esset regia in urbe positus, nascentem ibi nouam heresim de statu nostrae resurrectionis, cum ipso, quo exorta est, initio, iuuante se gratia catholicae ueritatis, attriuit. Siquidem Eutycius eiusdem urbis episcopus dogmatizabat corpus nostrum in illa resurrectionis gloria inpalpabile, uentis aereque subtilius esse futurum; quod ille audiens, et ratione ueritatis, et exemplo dominicae resurrectionis, probauit hoc dogma orthodoxae fidei omnimodis esse contrarium. Catholica etenim fides habet, quod corpus nostrum illa immortalitatis gloria sublimatum subtile quidem sit per effectum spiritualis potentiae, sed palpabile per ueritatem naturae;

iuxta exemplum dominici corporis, de quo a mortuis suscitato dicit ipse discipulis: 'Palpate et uidete, quia spiritus carnem et ossa non habet, sicut me uidetis habere.' In cuius adsertione fidei uenerabilis pater Gregorius in tantum contra nascentem heresim nouam laborare contendit, tanta hanc instantia, iuuante etiam piissimo imperatore Tiberio Constantino, conminuit, ut nullus exinde sit inuentus, qui eius resuscitator existeret.

Alium quoque librum composuit egregium, qui uocatur Pastoralis, in quo manifesta luce patefecit, quales ad ecclesiae regimen adsumi, qualiter ipsi rectores uiuere, qua discretione singulas quasque audientium instruere personas, et quanta consideratione propriam cotidie debeant fragilitatem pensare. Sed et omelias euangelii numero XL composuit, quas in duobus codicibus aequa sorte distinxit.

Libros etiam Dialogorum IIII fecit, in quibus, rogatu Petri diaconi sui, uirtutes sanctorum, quos in Italia clariores nosse uel audire poterat, ad exemplum uiuendi posteris collegit; ut, sicut in libris expositionum suarum, quibus sit uirtutibus insudandum, edocuit, ita etiam descriptis sanctorum miraculis, quae uirtutum earumdem sit claritas, ostenderet. Primam quoque et

ultimam Ezechielis prophetae partem, quae uidebantur obscuriores, per omelias XX et duas, quantum lucis intus habeant, demonstrauit. Excepto libello responsionum, quem ad interrogationes sancti Augustini primi Anglorum gentis episcopi scripsit, ut et supra docuimus, totum ipsum libellum his inserentes historiis; libello quoque synodico, quem cum episcopis Italiae de necessariis ecclesiae causis utillimum composuit, et familiaribus ad quosdam litteris. Quod eo magis mirum est tot eum ac tanta condere uolumina potuisse, quod omni pene iuuentutis suae tempore, ut uerbis ipsius loquar, crebris uiscerum doloribus cruciabatur, horis momentisque omnibus fracta stomachi uirtute lassescebat, lentis quidem, sed tamen continuis febribus anhelabat.

Uerum inter haec, dum sollicitus pensaret, quia scriptura teste: ‘Omnis filius, qui recipitur, flagellatur’; quo malis praesentibus durius deprimebatur, eo de aeterna certius praesumptione respirabat.

Haec quidem de inmortalis eius sint dicta ingenio, quod nec tanto corporis potuit dolore restingui. Nam alii quidam pontifices construendis ornandisque auro uel argento ecclesiis operam dabant, hic autem totus erga animarum lucra uacabat.

Quicquid pecuniae habuerat, sedulus hoc dispergere ac dare pauperibus curabat, ut iustitia eius maneret in saeculum saeculi, et cornu eius exaltaretur in gloria; ita ut illud beati Iob ueraciter dicere posset: ‘Auris audiens beatificauit me, et oculus uidens testimonium reddebat mihi, quod liberassem pauperem uociferantem, et pupillum, cui non esset adiutor. Benedictio perituri super me ueniebat, et cor uiduae consolatus sum. Iustitia indutus sum, et uestiui me, sicut uestimento et diademate, iudicio meo. Oculus fui caeco, et pes claudio. Pater eram pauperum, et causam, quam nesciebam, diligentissime inuestigabam. Conterebam molas iniqui, et de dentibus illius auferebam praedam.’ Et paulo post: ‘Si negaui,’

inquit, ‘quod uolebant, pauperibus, et oculos uiduae exspectare feci. Si comedi bucellam meam solus, et non comedit pupillus ex ea.

Quia ab infantia mea creuit mecum miseratio, et de utero matris meae egressa est mecum.’

Ad cuius pietatis et iustitiae opus pertinet etiam hoc, quod nostram gentem per praedicatores, quos huc direxit, de dentibus antiqui hostis eripiens aeternae libertatis fecit esse participem; cuius fidei et saluti congaudens, quamque digna laude commendans, ipse dicit in Expositione beati Iob: ‘Ecce lingua Britanniae, quae nil aliud nouerat quam barbarum frendere, iam dudum in diuinis laudibus Hebreum coepit alleluia resonare. Ecce quondam tumidus, iam substratus sanctorum pedibus seruit oceanus, eiusque barbaros motus, quos terreni principes edomare ferro nequiuierant, hos pro diuina formidine sacerdotum ora simplicibus uerbis ligant, et qui cateruas pugnantium infidelis nequaquam metueret, iam nunc fidelis humilium linguas timet. Quia enim perceptis caelestibus uerbis, clarescentibus quoque miraculis, uirtus ei diuinae cognitionis infunditur, eiusdem diuinitatis terrore refrenatur, ut praeue agere

metuat, ac totis desideriis ad aeternitatis gratiam uenire concupiscat.’ Quibus uerbis beatus Gregorius hoc quoque declarat, quia sanctus Augustinus et socii eius non sola praedicatione uerborum, sed etiam caelestium ostensione signorum gentem Anglorum ad agnitionem ueritatis perducebant.

Fecit inter alia beatus papa Gregorius, ut in ecclesiis sanctorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli super corpora eorum missae celebrarentur.

Sed et in ipsa missarum celebratione tria uerba maximae perfectionis plena superadiecit: ‘Diesque nostros in tua pace disponas, atque ab aeterna damnatione nos eripi, et in electorum tuorum iubeas grege numerari.’

Rexit autem ecclesiam temporibus imperatorum Mauricii et Focatis. Secundo autem eiusdem Focatis anno transiens ex hac uita, migravit ad ueram, quae in caelis est, uitam. Sepultus uero est corpore in ecclesia beati Petri apostoli, ante secretarium, die quarto Iduum Martiarum, quandoque in ipso cum ceteris sanctae ecclesiae pastoribus resurrecturus in gloria, scriptumque in tumba ipsius epitaphium huiusmodi:

Suscipe, terra, tuo corpus de corpore sumtum, Reddere quod ualeas uiuificante Deo.

Spiritus astra petit, leti nil iura nocebunt, Cui uitae alterius mors magis ipsa uia est.

Pontificis summi hoc clauduntur membra sepulchro, Qui innumeris semper uiuit ubique bonis.

Esuriem dapibus superauit, frigora ueste, Atque animas monitis textit ab hoste sacris.

Implebatque actu, quicquid sermone docebat, Esset ut exemplum, mystica uerba loquens.

Ad Christum Anglos conuertit pietate magistra, Adquirens fidei agmina gente noua.

Hic labor, hoc studium, haec tibi cura, hoc pastor agebas, Ut Domino offerres plurima lucra gregis.

Hisque Dei consul factus laetare triumphis; Nam mercedem operum iam sine fine tenes.

Nec silentio praetereunda opinio, quae de beato Gregorio traditione maiorum ad nos usque perlata est; qua uidelicet ex causa admonitus tam sedulam erga salutem nostrae gentis curam gesserit. Dicunt, quia die quadam cum, aduenientibus nuper mercatoribus, multa uenalia in forum fuissent conlata, multi ad emendum confluxissent, et ipsum Gregorium inter alios aduenisse, ac uidisse inter alia pueros uenales positos candidi corporis, ac uenusti uultus, capillorum quoque forma egregia. Quos cum aspiceret, interrogauit, ut aiunt, de qua regione uel terra essent adlati. Dictumque est, quia de Brittania insula, cuius incolae talis essent aspectus.

Rursus interrogauit, utrum idem insulani Christiani, an paganis adhuc erroribus essent implicati. Dictum est, quod essent pagani. At ille, intimo ex corde longa trahens suspiria: ‘Heu, pro dolor!’

inquit, ‘quod tam lucidi uultus homines tenebrarum auctor possidet,

tantaque gratia frontispicii mentem ab interna gratia uacuam gestat!’ Rursus ergo interrogauit, quod esset uocabulum gentis illius. Responsum est, quod Angli uocarentur. At ille: ‘Bene,’

inquit; ‘nam et angelicam habent faciem, et tales angelorum in caelis decet esse coheredes. Quod habet nomen ipsa prouincia, de qua isti sunt adlati?’ Responsum est, quod Deiri uocarentur idem prouinciales. At ille: ‘Bene,’ inquit, ‘Deiri; de ira eruti, et ad misericordiam Christi uocati. Rex prouinciae illius quomodo appellatur?’ Responsum est, quod Aelli diceretur. At ille adludens ad nomen ait: ‘Alleluia, laudem Dei Creatoris illis in partibus oportet cantari.’

Accedensque ad pontificem Romanae et apostolicae sedis, nondum enim erat ipse pontifex factus, rogauit, ut genti Anglorum in Britanniam aliquos uerbi ministros, per quos ad Christum conuerteretur, mitteret; se ipsum paratum esse in hoc opus Domino cooperante perficiendum, si tamen apostolico papae, hoc ut fieret, placeret.

Quod dum perficere non posset, quia, etsi pontifex concedere illi, quod petierat, uoluit, non tamen ciues Romani, ut tam longe ab urbe secederet, potuere permittere; mox ut ipse pontificatus officio functus est, perfecit opus diu desideratum; alios quidem praedicatores mittens, sed ipse praedicationem ut fructificaret, suis exhortationibus ac precibus adiuuans.

Haec iuxta opinionem, quam ab antiquis accepimus, historiae nostrae ecclesiasticae inserere opportunum duximus.

[2] Interea Augustinus adiutorio usus Aedilbercti regis conuocauit ad suum colloquium episcopos siue doctores proximae Brettonum prouinciae in loco, qui usque hodie lingua Anglorum Augustinaes ac, id est robur Augustini, in confinio Huiccorum et Occidentalium Saxonum appellatur; coepitque eis fraterna admonitione suadere, ut pace catholica secum habita communem euangelizandi gentibus pro Domino laborem susciperent. Non enim paschae diem dominicum suo tempore, sed a XIII usque ad XX lunam obseruabant; quae computatio LXXXIII annorum circulo continetur. Sed et alia plurima unitati ecclesiasticae contraria faciebant. Qui cum longa disputatione habita, neque precibus, neque hortamentis, neque increpationibus Augustini ac sociorum eius adsensum praebere uoluissent, sed suas potius traditiones uniuersis, quae per orbem sibi in Christo concordant, ecclesiis praeferrent, sanctus pater Augustinus hunc laboriosi ac longi certaminis finem fecit, ut diceret: ‘Obsecremus Deum, qui habitare facit unanimes in domu Patris sui, ut ipse nobis insinuare caelestibus signis dignetur, quae sequenda traditio, quibus sit uiis ad ingressum regni illius properandum. Adducatur aliquis eger, et per cuius preces fuerit curatus, huius fides et operatio Deo deuota atque omnibus sequenda credatur.’ Quod cum aduersarii, inuiti licet, concederent, adlatus est quidam de genere Anglorum, oculorum luce priuatus; qui cum oblatus Brettonum sacerdotibus nil curationis uel sanationis horum ministerio perciperet, tandem Augustinus, iusta necessitate compulsus, flectit genua sua ad Patrem Domini nostri Iesu Christi, deprecans, ut uisum caeco, quem

amiserat, restitueret, et per inlumptionem unius hominis corporalem, in plurimorum corde fidelium spiritalis gratiam lucis accenderet. Nec mora, inluminatur caecus, ac uerus summae lucis praeco ab omnibus praedicatur Augustinus. Tum Brettones confitentur quidem intellexisse se ueram esse uiam iustitiae, quam praedicaret Augustinus; sed non se posse absque suorum consensu ac licentia priscis abdicare moribus. Unde postulabant, ut secundo synodus pluribus aduenientibus fieret.

Quod cum esset statutum, uenerunt, ut perhibent, VII Brettonum episcopi et plures uiri doctissimi, maxime de nobilissimo eorum monasterio, quod uocatur lingua Anglorum Bancornaburg, cui tempore illo Dinoot abbas praefuisse narratur, qui ad praefatum ituri concilium uenerunt primo ad quendam uirum sanctum ac prudentem, qui apud eos anachoreticam ducere uitam solebat, consulentes, an ad praedicationem Augustini suas deserere traditiones deberent. Qui respondebat: ‘Si homo Dei est, sequimini illum.’ Dixerunt: ‘Et unde hoc possumus probare?’ At ille: ‘Dominus,’ inquit, ‘ait: “Tollite iugum meum super uos, et discite a me, quia mitis sum et humilis corde.” Si ergo Augustinus ille mitis est et humilis corde, credibile est, quia iugum Christi et ipse portet, et uobis portandum offerat; sin autem inmitis ac superbus est, constat, quia non est de Deo, neque nobis eius sermo curandus.’ Qui rursus aiebant: ‘Et unde uel hoc dinoscere ualemus?’ ‘Procurate,’ inquit, ‘ut ipse prior cum suis ad locum synodi adueniat, et, si uobis adpropinquantibus adsurrexerit, scientes, quia famulus Christi est, obtemperanter illum audite; sin autem uos spreuerit, nec coram uobis adsurgere uoluerit, cum sitis numero plures, et ipse spernatur a uobis.’

Fecerunt, ut dixerat. Factumque est, ut uenientibus illis sederet Augustinus in sella. Quod illi uidentes mox in iram conuersi sunt, eumque notantes superbiae, cunctis, quae dicebat, contradicere laborabant. Dicebat autem eis quia ‘in multis quidem nostrae consuetudini, immo uniuersalis ecclesiae contraria geritis; et tamen si in tribus his mihi obtemperare uultis, ut pascha suo tempore celebretis; ut ministerium baptizandi, quo Deo renascimur, iuxta morem sanctae Romanae et apostolicae ecclesiae compleatis; ut genti Anglorum una nobiscum uerbum Domini praedicetis; cetera, quae agitis, quamuis moribus nostris contraria, aequanimiter cuncta tolerabimus.’ At illi nil horum se facturos, neque illum pro archiepiscopo habituros esse respondebant; conferentes ad inuicem, quia ‘si modo nobis adsurgere noluit, quanto magis, si ei subdi coeperimus, iam nos pro nihilo contemnet.’

Quibus uir Domini Augustinus fertur minitans praedixisse, quia, si pacem cum fratribus accipere nollent, bellum ab hostibus forent accepturi; et, si nationi Anglorum noluissent uiam uitae praedicare, per horum manus ultionem essent mortis passuri. Quod ita per omnia, ut praedixerat, diuino agente iudicio patratum est.

Siquidem post haec ipse, de quo diximus, rex Anglorum fortissimus Aedilfrid collecto grandi exercitu ad ciuitatem Legionum, quae a gente Anglorum Legacaestir, a Brettonibus autem rectius Carlegion appellatur,

maximam gentis perfidae stragem dedit. Cumque bellum acturus uideret sacerdotes eorum, qui ad exorandum Deum pro milite bellum agente conuenerant, seorsum in tutiore loco consistere, sciscitabatur, qui essent hi, quidue acturi illo conuenissent. Erant autem plurimi eorum de monasterio Bancor, in quo tantus fertur fuisse numerus monachorum, ut, cum in VII portiones esset cum praepositis sibi rectoribus monasterium diuisum, nulla harum portio minus quam CCCtos homines haberet, qui omnes de labore manuum suarum uiuere solebant. Horum ergo plurimi ad memoratam aciem, peracto ieiunio triduo, cum aliis orandi causa conuenerant, habentes defensorem nomine Brocmailum, qui eos intentos precibus a barbarorum gladiis protegeret. Quorum causam aduentus cum intellexisset rex Ādilfrid, ait: 'Ergo si aduersum nos ad Deum suum clamant, profecto et ipsi, quamuis arma non ferant, contra nos pugnant, qui aduersis nos inprecationibus persequuntur.' Itaque in hos primum arma uerti iubet, et sic ceteras nefandae militiae copias non sine magno exercitus sui damno deleuit. Exstinctos in ea pugna ferunt de his, qui ad orandum uenerant, uiros circiter mille CCtos, et solum L fuga esse lapsos. Brocmail ad primum hostium aduentum cum suis terga uertens, eos, quos defendere debuerat, inermes ac nudos ferientibus gladiis reliquit. Sicque completum est praesagium sancti pontificis Augustini, quamuis ipso iam multo ante tempore ad caelestia regna sublato, ut etiam temporalis interitus ultione sentirent perfidi, quod oblata sibi perpetuae salutis consilia spreuerant.

[3] Anno dominicae incarnationis DCIII^{mo}, Augustinus Britanniarum archiepiscopus ordinauit duos episcopos, Mellitum uidelicet et Iustum; Mellitum quidem ad praedicandum prouinciae Orientalium Saxonum, qui Tamense fluuium dirimuntur a Cantia, et ipsi orientali mari contigui, quorum metropolis Lundonia ciuitas est, super ripam praefati fluminis posita, et ipsa multorum emporium populorum terra marique uenientium; in qua uidelicet gente tunc temporis Saberct nepos Aedilbercti ex sorore Ricula regnabat, quamuis sub potestate positus eiusdem Aedilbercti, qui omnibus, ut supra dictum est, usque ad terminum Humbrae fluminis Anglorum gentibus imperabat.

Ubi uero et haec prouincia uerbum ueritatis praedicante Mellito accepit, fecit rex Aedilberct in ciuitate Lundonia ecclesiam sancti Pauli apostoli, in qua locum sedis episcopalis, et ipse, et successores eius haberent. Iustum uero in ipsa Cantia Augustinus episcopum ordinauit in ciuitate Dorubreui, quam gens Anglorum a primario quondam illius, qui dicebatur Hrof, Hrofascastra cognominat.

Distat autem a Doruuerni milibus passuum ferme XXIII ad occidentem, in qua rex Aedilberct ecclesiam beati Andreae apostoli fecit, qui etiam episcopis utriusque huius ecclesiae dona multa, sicut et Doruuernensis, obtulit; sed et territoria ac possessiones in usum eorum, qui erant cum episcopis, adiecit.

Defunctus est autem Deo dilectus pater Augustinus, et positum corpus eius foras iuxta ecclesiam beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, cuius supra

meminimus, quia necdum fuerat perfecta nec dedicata. Mox uero ut dedicata est, intro inlatum, et in porticu illius aquilonali decenter sepultum est; in qua etiam sequentium archiepiscoporum omnium sunt corpora tumulata praeter duorum tantummodo, id est Theodori et Berctualdi, quorum corpora in ipsa ecclesia posita sunt, eo quod praedicta porticus plura capere nequiuisset. Habet haec in medio pene sui altare in honore beati papae Gregorii dedicatum, in quo per omne sabbatum a presbytero loci illius agenda eorum sollemniter celebrantur. Scriptum uero est in tumba eiusdem Augustini epitaphium huiusmodi: ‘Hic requiescit domnus Augustinus Doruuernensis archiepiscopus primus, qui olim huc a beato Gregorio Romanae urbis pontifice directus, et a Deo operatione miraculorum suffultus, Aedilbertum regem ac gentem illius ab idolorum cultu ad Christi fidem perduxit, et conpletis in pace diebus officii sui, defunctus est VII Kalendas Iunias, eodem rege regnante.’

[4] Successit Augustino in episcopatum Laurentius, quem ipse idcirco adhuc uiuens ordinauerat, ne, se defuncto, status ecclesiae tam rudis uel ad horam pastore destitutus uacillare inciperet. In quo et exemplum sequebatur primi pastoris ecclesiae, hoc est beatissimi apostolorum principis Petri, qui, fundata Romae ecclesia Christi, Clementem sibi adiutorem euangelizandi, simul et successorem consecrasset perhibetur. Laurentius archiepiscopi gradu potitus strenuissime fundamenta ecclesiae, quae nobiliter iacta uidit, augmentare, atque ad profectum debiti culminis, et crebra uoce sanctae exhortationis, et continuis piaae operationis exemplis prouehere curauit. Denique non solum nouae, quae de Anglis erat collecta, ecclesiae curam gerebat, sed et ueterum Britanniae incolarum, nec non et Scottorum, qui Hiberniam insulam Britanniae proximam incolunt, populis pastorem impendere sollicitudinem curabat. Siquidem ubi Scottorum in praefata ipsorum patria, quomodo et Brettonum in ipsa Britannia, uitam ac professionem minus ecclesiasticam in multis esse cognouit, maxime quod paschae sollemnitatem non suo tempore celebrarent, sed, ut supra docuimus, a XIIIa luna usque ad XXam dominicae resurrectionis diem obseruandum esse putarent; scripsit cum coepiscopis suis exhortatoriam ad eos epistulam, obsecrans eos et contestans unitatem pacis et catholicae obseruationis cum ea, quae toto orbe diffusa est, ecclesia Christi tenere; cuius uidelicet epistulae principium hoc est:

Dominis carissimis fratribus episcopis uel abbatibus per uniuersam Scottiam Laurentius, Mellitus, et Iustus episcopi, serui seruorum Dei.

Dum nos sedes apostolica more suo, sicut in uniuerso orbe terrarum, in his occidujs partibus ad praedicandum gentibus paganis dirigeret, atque in hanc insulam, quae Britannia nuncupatur, contigit introisse; antequam cognosceremus, credentes, quod iuxta morem uniuersalis ecclesiae ingrederentur, in magna reuerentia sanctitatis tam Brettones quam Scottos uenerati sumus; sed cognoscentes Brettones, Scottos meliores putauimus. Scottos uero per Daganum episcopum in hanc, quam superius memorauius, insulam, et Columbanum abbatem in Gallis uenientem nihil discrepare a Brettonibus in eorum conuersatione didicimus. Nam Daganus episcopus ad

nos ueniens, non solum cibum nobiscum, sed nec in eodem hospitio, quo uescbamur, sumere uoluit.

Misit idem Laurentius cum coepiscopis suis etiam Brettonum sacerdotibus litteras suo gradui condignas, quibus eos in unitate catholica confirmare satagit. Sed quantum haec agendo profecerit, adhuc praesentia tempora declarant.

His temporibus uenit Mellitus Lundoniae episcopus Romam, de necessariis ecclesiae Anglorum cum apostolico papa Bonifatio tractaturus. Et cum idem papa reuerentissimus cogeret synodum episcoporum Italiae, de uita monachorum et quiete ordinaturus, et ipse Mellitus inter eos adsedit anno VIII imperii Focatis principis, indictione XIIIa, tertio die Kalendarum Martiarum;

ut quaeque erant regulariter decreta, sua quoque auctoritate subscribens confirmaret, ac Brittaniam rediens secum Anglorum ecclesiis mandanda atque obseruanda deferret, una cum epistulis, quas idem pontifex Deo dilecto archiepiscopo Laurentio et clero uniuerso, similiter et Aedilbercto regi atque genti Anglorum direxit. Hic est Bonifatius, quartus a beato Gregorio Romanae urbis episcopo, qui inpetrauit a Focate principe donari ecclesiae Christi templum Romae, quod Pantheon uocabatur ab antiquis, quasi simulacrum esset omnium deorum; in quo ipse, eliminata omni spurcitia, fecit ecclesiam sanctae Dei genetricis atque omnium martyrum Christi;

ut, exclusa multitudine daemonum, multitudo ibi sanctorum memoriam haberet.

[5] Anno ab incarnatione dominica DCXVI, qui est annus XXI, ex quo Augustinus cum sociis ad praedicandum genti Anglorum missus est, Aedilberct rex Cantuariorum post regnum temporale, quod L et VI annis gloriosissime tenuerat, aeterna caelestis regni gaudia subiit;

qui tertius quidem in regibus gentis Anglorum cunctis australibus eorum prouinciis, quae Humbrae fluuiio et contiguis ei terminis sequestrantur a borealibus, imperauit; sed primus omnium caeli regna conscendit. Nam primus imperium huiusmodi Aelli rex Australium Saxonum;

secundus Caelin rex Occidentalium Saxonum, qui lingua ipsorum Ceaulin uocabatur; tertius, ut diximus, Aedilberct rex Cantuariorum; quartus Reduald rex Orientalium Anglorum, qui etiam uiuente Aedilbercto eidem suae genti ducatum praebebat, obtinuit;

quintus Aeduini rex Nordanhymbrorum gentis, id est eius, quae ad Borealem Humbrae fluminis plagam inhabitat, maiore potentia cunctis, qui Brittaniam incolunt, Anglorum pariter et Brettonum populis praefuit, praeter Cantuariis tantum; nec non et Meuanias Brettonum insulas, quae inter Hiberniam et Brittaniam sitae sunt, Anglorum subiecit imperio; sextus Osuald et ipse Nordanhymbrorum rex Christianissimus, hisdem finibus regnum tenuit; septimus Osuii frater eius, aequalibus pene terminis regnum nonnullo tempore coercens, Pictorum quoque atque Scottorum gentes, quae septentrionales Britanniae fines tenent, maxima ex parte perdomuit, ac tributarias fecit. Sed haec postmodum.

Defunctus uero est rex Aedilberct die XXIII mensis Februarii post XX et unum annos acceptae fidei, atque in porticu sancti Martini intro ecclesiam beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli sepultus, ubi et Berctaregina condita est.

Qui inter cetera bona, quae genti suae consulendo conferebat, etiam decreta illi iudiciorum, iuxta exempla Romanorum, cum consilio sapientium constituit; quae conscripta Anglorum sermone hactenus habentur, et obseruantur ab ea. In quibus primitus posuit, qualiter id emendare deberet, qui aliquid rerum uel ecclesiae, uel episcopi, uel reliquorum ordinum furto auferret;

uolens scilicet tuitionem eis, quos et quorum doctrinam susceperat, praestare.

Erat autem idem Aedilberct filius Irminrici, cuius pater Octa, cuius pater Oeric cognomento Oisc, a quo reges Cantuariorum solent Oiscingas cognominare. Cuius pater Hengist, qui cum filio suo Oisc inuitatus a Uurtigerno Britanniam primus intrauit, ut supra retulimus.

At uero post mortem Aedilbercti, cum filius eius Eadbald regni gubernacula suscepisset, magno tenellis ibi adhuc ecclesiae crementis detrimento fuit. Siquidem non solum fidem Christi recipere noluerat, sed et fornicatione pollutus est tali, qualem nec inter gentes auditam apostolus testatur, ita ut uxorem patris haberet. Quo utroque scelere occasionem dedit ad priorem uomitum reuertendi his, qui sub imperio sui parentis, uel fauore uel timore regio, fidei et castimoniae iura susceperant. Nec supernae flagella distractionis perfido regi castigando et corrigendo defuere; nam crebra mentis uesania, et spiritus inmundi inuasionem premebatur.

Auxit autem procellam huiusce perturbationis etiam mors Sabercti regis Orientalium Saxonum, qui ubi regna perennia petens tres suos filios, qui pagani perdurauerant, regni temporalis heredes reliquit, coeperunt illi mox idolatriae, quam, uiuente eo, aliquantulum intermisisse uidebantur, palam seruire, subiectisque populis idola colendi liberam dare licentiam. Cumque uiderent pontificem, celebratis in ecclesia missarum sollemniis, eucharistiam populo dare, dicebant, ut uulgo fertur, ad eum barbara inflati stultitia: ‘Quare non et nobis porrigis panem nitidum, quem et patri nostro Saba,’ sic namque eum appellare consuerant, ‘dabas, et populo adhuc dare in ecclesia non desistis?’ Quibus ille respondebat: ‘Si uultis ablui fonte illo salutari, quo pater uester ablutus est, potestis etiam panis sancti, cui ille participabat, esse participes; sin autem lauacrum uitae contemnitis, nullatenus ualetis panem uitae percipere.’ At illi: ‘Nolumus,’ inquiunt, ‘fontem illum intrare, quia nec opus illo nos habere nouimus, sed tamen pane illo refici uolumus.’ Cumque diligenter ac saepe ab illo essent admoniti nequaquam ita fieri posse, ut absque purgatione sacrosancta quis oblationi sacrosanctae communicaret, ad ultimum furore commoti aiebant: ‘Si non uis adsentire nobis in tam facili causa, quam petimus, non poteris iam in nostra prouincia demorari.’ Et expulerunt eum, ac de suo regno cum suis abire iusserunt.

Qui expulsus inde uenit Cantiam, tractaturus cum Laurentio et Iusto

coepiscopis, quid in his esset agendum. Decretumque est communi consilio, quia satius esset, ut omnes patriam redeuntes, libera ibi mente Domino deseruirent, quam inter rebelles fidei barbaros sine fructu residerent.

Discessere itaque primo Mellitus et Iustus, atque ad partes Galliae secessere, ibi rerum finem expectare disponentes. Sed non multo tempore reges, qui praeconem a se ueritatis expulerant, daemonicis cultibus inpune seruiebant. Nam egressi contra gentem Geuissorum in proelium, omnes pariter cum sua militia corruerunt; nec, licet auctoribus perditis, excitatum ad scelera uulgus potuit corrigi, atque ad simplicitatem fidei et caritatis, quae est in Christo, reuocari.

[6] Cum uero et Laurentius Mellitum Iustumque secuturus ac Britanniam esset relicturus, iussit ipsa sibi nocte in ecclesia beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, de qua frequenter iam diximus, stratum parari; in quo, cum post multas preces ac lacrimas ad Dominum pro statu ecclesiae fusas ad quiescendum membra posuisset, atque obdormisset, apparuit ei beatissimus apostolorum princeps, et multo illum tempore secretae noctis flagellis artioribus afficiens sciscitabatur apostolica districtione, quare gregem, quem sibi ipse crediderat, relinqueret, uel cui pastorum oues Christi in medio luporum positas fugiens ipse dimitteret.’ ‘An mei,’

inquit, ‘oblitus es exempli, qui pro paruulis Christi, quos mihi in indicium suae dilectionis commendauerat, uincula, uerbera, carceres, afflictiones, ipsam postremo mortem, mortem autem crucis, ab infidelibus et inimicis Christi ipse cum Christo coronandus pertuli?’ His beati Petri flagellis simul ex exhortationibus animatus famulus Christi Laurentius mox mane facto uenit ad regem, et, relecto uestimento, quantis esset uerberibus laceratus, ostendit. Qui multum miratus et inquirens, quis tanto uiro tales ausus esset plagas infligere; ut audiuit, quia suae causa salutis episcopus ab apostolo Christi tanta esset tormenta plagasque perpessus, extimuit multum; atque anathematizato omni idolatriae cultu, abdicato conubio non legitimo, suscepit fidem Christi, et baptizatus ecclesiae rebus, quantum ualuit, in omnibus consulere ac fauere curauit.

Misit etiam Galliam, et reuocauit Mellitum ac Iustum, eosque ad suas ecclesias libere instituendas redire praecepit; qui post annum, ex quo abierunt, reuersi sunt; et Iustus quidem ad ciuitatem Hrofi, cui prae fuerat, rediit; Mellitum uero Londonienses episcopum recipere noluerunt, idolatris magis pontificibus seruire gaudentes. Non enim tanta erat ei, quanta patri ipsius regni potestas, ut etiam nolentibus ac contradicentibus paganis antistitem suae posset ecclesiae reddere. Uerumtamen ipse cum sua gente, ex quo ad Dominum conuersus est, diuinis se studuit mancipare praeceptis. Denique et in monasterio beatissimi apostolorum principis ecclesiam sanctae Dei genetricis fecit, quam consecrauit archiepiscopus Mellitus.

[7] Hoc enim regnante rege beatus archiepiscopus Laurentius regnum caeleste conscendit, atque in ecclesia et monasterio sancti apostoli Petri iuxta prodecessorem suum Augustinum sepultus est die quarto Nonarum

Februariarum; post quem Mellitus, qui erat Lundoniae episcopus, sedem Doruuernensis ecclesiae tertius ab Augustino suscepit. Iustus autem adhuc superstes Hrofensem regebat ecclesiam. Qui, cum magna ecclesiam Anglorum cura ac labore gubernarent, susceperunt scripta exhortatoria a pontifice Romanae et apostolicae sedis Bonifatio, qui post Deusdedit ecclesiae praefuit, anno incarnationis dominicae DCXVIII. Erat autem Mellitus corporis quidem infirmitate, id est podagra, grauatus, sed mentis gressibus sanis alacriter terrena quaeque transiliens, atque ad caelestia semper amanda, petenda, et quaerenda peruolans. Erat carnis origine nobilis, sed culmine mentis nobilior.

Denique, ut unum uirtutis eius, unde cetera intellegi possint, testimonium referam, tempore quodam ciuitas Doruuernensis per culpam incuriae igni correpta crebrescentibus coepit flammis consumi;

quibus cum nullo aquarum iniectu posset aliquis obsistere, iamque ciuitatis esset pars uastata non minima, atque ad episcopium furens se flamma dilataret, confidens episcopus in diuinum, ubi humanum deerat, auxilium, iussit se obuiam saeuientibus et huc illucque uolantibus ignium globis efferri. Erat autem eo loci, ubi flammarum impetus maxime incumbibat, martyrium beatorum IIII Coronatorum. Ibi ergo perlatus obsequentum manibus episcopus coepit orando periculum infirmus abigere, quod firma fortium manus multum laborando nequiuerat. Nec mora, uentus, qui a meridie flans urbi incendia sparserat, contra meridiem reflexus, primo uim sui furoris a lesione locorum, quae contra erant, abstraxit, ac mox funditus quiescendo, flammis pariter sopitis atque extinctis, conpescuit. Et quia uir Dei igne diuinae caritatis fortiter ardebat, quia tempestates potestatum aeriarum a sua suorumque lesione crebris orationibus uel exhortationibus repellere consuerat, merito uentis flammisque mundialibus praeualere, et, ne sibi suisque nocerent, obtinere poterat.

Et hic ergo postquam annis quinque rexit ecclesiam, Aeodbaldo regnante migravit ad caelos, sepultusque est cum patribus suis in saepe dicto monasterio et ecclesia beatissimi apostolorum principis, anno ab incarnatione Domini DCXXIII, die VIII Kalendarum Maiarum.

[8] Cui statim successit in pontificatum Iustus, qui erat Hrofensis ecclesiae episcopus. Illi autem ecclesiae Romanum pro se consecrauit episcopum, data sibi ordinandi episcopos auctoritate a pontifice Bonifatio, quem successorem fuisse Deusdedit supra meminimus; cuius auctoritatis ista est forma:

Dilectissimo fratri Iusto Bonifatius.

Quam deuote quamque etiam uigilanter pro Christi euangelio elaborauerit uestra fraternitas, non solum epistulae a uobis directae tenor, immo indulta desuper operi uestro perfectio indicauit.

Nec enim omnipotens Deus aut sui nominis sacramentum, aut uestri fructum laboris deseruit, dum ipse praedicatoribus euangelii fideliter repromisit: 'Ecce ego uobiscum sum omnibus diebus usque ad consummationem mundi.' Quod specialiter iniuncto uobis ministerio, eius clementia demonstraui, aperiens corda gentium ad suscipiendum

praedicationis uestrae singulare mysterium. Magno enim praemio fastigiorum uestrorum delectabilem cursum bonitatis suae suffragiis inlustrauit, dum creditorum uobis talentorum fidelissimae negotiationis officiis uberem fructum inpendens ei, quod signare possetis multiplicatis generationibus, praeparauit.

Hocque etiam illa uobis repensatione conlatum est, qua iniuncto ministerio iugiter persistentes laudabili patientia redemptionem gentis illius exspectastis, et uestris, ut proficerent, meritis eorum est saluatio propinata, dicente Domino: 'Qui perseuerauerit usque in finem, hic saluus erit.' Saluati ergo estis spe patientiae et tolerantiae uirtute, ut infidelium corda naturali ac superstitioso morbo purgata, sui consequerentur misericordiam Saluatoris. Susceptis namque apicibus filii nostri Adulualdi regis, repperimus, quanta sacri eloqui eruditione eius animum ad uerae conuersionis et indubitatae fidei credulitatem fraternitas uestra perduxerit. Qua ex re de longanimitate clementiae caelestis certam adsumentes fiduciam, non solum suppositarum ei gentium plenissimam salutem, immo quoque uicinarum, uestrae praedicationis ministerio credimus subsequendam;

quatinus, sicut scriptum est, consummati operis uobis merces a retributore omnium bonorum Domino tribuatur, et uere 'per omnem terram exisse sonum eorum, et in fines orbis terrae uerba ipsorum,'

uniuersalis gentium confessio, suscepto Christianae sacramento fidei, protestetur.

Pallium praeterea per latorem praesentium fraternitati tuae, benignitatis studiis inuitati, direximus, quod uidelicet tantum in sacrosanctis celebrandis mysteriis utendi licentiam imperauimus;

concedentes etiam tibi ordinationes episcoporum, exigente oportunitate, Domini praeueniente misericordia, celebrare; ita ut Christi euangelium plurimorum adnuntiatione in omnibus gentibus, quae necdum conuersae sunt, dilatetur. Studeat ergo tua fraternitas hoc, quod sedis apostolicae humanitate percepit, intemerata mentis sinceritate seruare, intendens cuius rei similitudine tam praecipuum indumentum humeris tuis baiulandum suscepis. Talemque te Domini inplorata clementia exhibendum stude, ut indulti muneris praemia non cum reatitudine, sed cum commodis animarum ante tribunal summi et uenturi Iudicis repraesentes.

Deus te incolumem custodiat, dilectissime frater.

[9] Quo tempore etiam gens Nordanhymbrorum, hoc est ea natio Anglorum, quae ad Aquilonalem Hambre fluminis plagam habitabat, cum rege suo Aeduino uerbum fidei praedicante Paulino, cuius supra meminimus, suscepit. Cui uidelicet regi, in auspiciis suscipiendae fidei et regni caelestis, potestas etiam terreni creuerat imperii;

ita ut, quod nemo Anglorum ante eum, omnes Britanniae fines, qua uel ipsorum uel Brettonum prouinciae habitabant, sub dicione acciperet.

Quin et Meuanias insulas, sicut et supra docuimus, imperio subiugauit Anglorum; quarum prior, quae ad austrum est, et situ amplior, et frugum

prouentu atque ubertate feliciar, nongentarum LX familiarum mensuram iuxta aestimationem Anglorum, secunda trecentarum et ultra spatium tenet.

Huic autem genti occasio fuit percipiendae fidei, quod praefatus rex eius cognatione iunctus est regibus Cantuariorum, accepta in coniugem Aedilbergae filia Aedilbercti regis, quae alio nomine Tatae uocabatur. Huius consortium cum primo ipse missis procis a fratre eius Aeodbaldo, qui tunc regno Cantuariorum praeerat, peteret;

responsum est non esse licitum Christianam uirginem pagano in coniugem dari, ne fides et sacramenta caelestis regis consortio profanarentur regis, qui ueri Dei cultus esset prorsus ignarus. Quae cum Aeduino uerba nuntii referrent, promisit se nil omnimodis contrarium Christianae fidei, quam uirgo colebat, esse facturum;

quin potius permissurum, ut fidem cultumque suae religionis cum omnibus, qui secum uenissent, uiris siue feminis, sacerdotibus seu ministris, more Christiano seruaret. Neque abnegauit se etiam eandem subiturum esse religionem; si tamen examinata a prudentibus sanctior ac Deo dignior posset inueniri.

Itaque promittitur uirgo, atque atduino mittitur, et iuxta quod dispositum fuerat, ordinatur episcopus uir Deo dilectus Paulinus, qui cum illa ueniret, eamque et comites eius, ne paganorum possent societate pollui, cotidiana et exhortatione, et sacramentorum caelestium celebratione confirmaret.

Ordinatus est autem Paulinus episcopus a Iusto archiepiscopo, sub die XII Kalendarum Augustarum, anno ab incarnatione Domini DCXXV; et sic cum praefata uirgine ad regem Aeduinum quasi comes copulae carnalis aduenit. Sed ipse potius toto animo intendens, ut gentem, quam adibat, ad agnitionem ueritatis aduocans, iuxta uocem apostoli, uni uero sponso uirginem castam exhiberet Christo. Cumque in prouinciam uenisset, laborauit multum, ut et eos, qui secum uenerant, ne a fide deficerent, Domino adiuuante contineret, et aliquos, si forte posset, de paganis ad fidei gratiam praedicando conuerteret. Sed sicut apostolus ait, quamuis multo tempore illo laborante in uerbo: ‘Deus saeculi huius excaecauit mentes infidelium, ne eis fulgeret inluminatio euangelii gloriae Christi.’

Anno autem sequente uenit in prouinciam quidam sicarius uocabulo Eumer, missus a rege Occidentalium Saxonum nomine Cuichelmo, sperans se regem Aeduinum regno simul et uita priuaturum; qui habebat sicam bicipitem toxicatam; ut si ferri uulnus minus ad mortem regis sufficeret, peste iuuaretur ueneni. Peruenit autem ad regem primo die paschae iuxta amnem Deruuentionem, ubi tunc erat uilla regalis, intrauitque quasi nuntium domini sui referens; et cum simulatam legationem ore astuto uolueret, exsurrexit repente, et, euaginata sub ueste sica, impetum fecit in regem. Quod cum uideret Lilla minister regi amicissimus, non habens scutum ad manum, quo regem a nece defenderet, mox interposuit corpus suum ante ictum pungentis;

sed tanta ui hostis ferrum infixit, ut per corpus militis occisi etiam regem uulneraret. Qui cum mox undique gladiis inpeteretur, in ipso tumultu etiam

alium de militibus, cui nomen erat Fordheri, sica nefanda peremit. Eadem autem nocte sacrosancta dominici paschae pepererat regina filiam regi, cui nomen Atanfled. Cumque idem rex, praesente Paulino episcopo, gratias ageret diis suis pro nata sibi filia, e contra episcopus gratias coepit agere Domino Christo, regique adstruere, quod ipse precibus suis apud illum obtinuerit, ut regina sospes et absque dolore graui sobolem procrearet. Cuius uerbis delectatus rex, promisit se, abrenuntiatis idolis, Christo seruiturum, si uitam sibi et uictoriam donaret pugnanti aduersus regem, a quo homicida ille, qui eum uulnerauerat, missus est; et in pignus promissionis inplendae, eandem filiam suam Christo consecrandam Paulino episcopo adsignauit; quae baptizata est die sancto pentecostes prima de gente Nordanhymbrorum, cum XI aliis de familia eius.

Quo tempore curatus a uulnere sibi pridem inflicto, rex collecto exercitu uenit aduersus gentem Occidentalium Saxonum, ac bello inito uniuersos, quos in necem suam conspirasse didicerat, aut occidit, aut in deditionem recepit. Sicque uictor in patriam reuersus, non statim et inconsulte sacramenta fidei Christianae percipere uoluit;

quamuis nec idolis ultra seruiuit, ex quo se Christo seruiturum esse promiserat. Uerum primo diligentius ex tempore, et ab ipso uenerabili uiro Paulino rationem fidei ediscere, et cum suis primatibus, quos sapientiores nouerat, curauit conferre, quid de his agendum arbitrarentur. Sed et ipse, cum esset uir natura sagacissimus, saepe diu solus residens ore quidem tacito, sed in intimis cordis multa secum conloquens, quid sibi esset faciendum, quae religio seruanda tractabat.

[10] Quo tempore exhortatorias ad fidem litteras a pontifice sedis apostolicae Bonifatius accepit, quarum ista est forma:

Exemplar epistulae beatissimi et apostolici papae urbis Romanae ecclesiae Bonifatii directae uiro glorioso Āduino regi Anglorum. Uiro glorioso Aeduino regi Anglorum, Bonifatius episcopus seruus seruorum Dei.

Licet summae diuinitatis potentia humanae locutionis officiis explanari non ualeat, quippe quae sui magnitudine ita inuisibili atque inuestigabili aeternitate consistit, ut haec nulla ingenii sagacitas, quanta sit, comprehendere disserereque sufficiat; quia tamen eius humanitas ad insinuationem sui reseratis cordis ianuis, quae de semet ipsa proferetur secreta humanis mentibus inspiratione clementer infundit; ad adnuntiandam uobis plenitudinem fidei Christianae sacerdotalem curauimus sollicitudinem prorogare, ut perinde Christi euangelium, quod Saluator noster omnibus praecepit gentibus praedicari, uestris quoque sensibus inserentes, salutis uestrae remedia propinentur. Supernae igitur maiestatis clementia, quae cuncta solo uerbo praeceptionis suae condidit et creauit, caelum uidelicet et terram, mare et omnia, quae in eis sunt, dispositis ordinibus, quibus subsisterent, coaeterni Uerbi sui consilio, et Sancti Spiritus unitate dispensans, hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem suam ex limo terrae plasmatum constituit, eique tantam praemii praerogatiuam indulsit, ut eum cunctis

praeponeret, atque seruato termino praeceptionis, aeternitatis subsistentia praemuniret. Hunc ergo Deum Patrem, et Filium, et Spiritum Sanctum, quod est indiuidua Trinitas, ab ortu solis usque ad occasum, humanum genus, quippe ut creatorem omnium atque factorem suum, salutifera confessione fide ueneratur et colit; cui etiam summitates imperii rerumque potestates submissae sunt, quia eius dispositione omnium praelatio regnorum conceditur. Eius ergo bonitatis misericordia totius creaturae suae dilatandi subdi etiam in extremitate terrae positarum gentium corda frigida, Sancti Spiritus feruore in sui quoque agnitione mirabiliter est dignata succendere.

Quae enim in gloriosi filii nostri Audubaldi regis gentibusque ei subpositis inlustratione, clementia Redemptoris fuerit operata, plenius ex uicinitate locorum uestram gloriam conicimus cognouisse.

Eius ergo mirabile donum et in uobis certa spe, caelesti longanimitate conferri confidimus; cum profecto gloriosam coniugem uestram, quae uestri corporis pars esse dinoscitur, aeternitatis praemio per sacri baptismatis regenerationem inluminatam agnouimus.

Unde praesenti stilo gloriosos uos adhortandos cum omni affectu intimae caritatis curauimus;

quatinus abominatis idolis eorumque cultu, spretisque fanorum fatuitatibus, et auguriorum deceptabilibus blandimentis, credatis in Deum Patrem omnipotentem, eiusque Filium Iesum Christum, et Spiritum Sanctum, ut credentes, a diabolicae captiuitatis nexibus, sanctae et indiuiduae Trinitatis cooperante potentia, absoluti, aeternae uitae possitis esse participes.

Quanta autem reatitudinis culpa teneantur obstricti hi, qui idolatriarum perniciosissimam superstitionem colentes amplectuntur, eorum, quos colunt, exempla perditionis insinuant; unde de eis per psalmistam dicitur: 'Omnes dii gentium daemonia, Dominus autem caelos fecit.' Et iterum: 'Oculos habent, et non uident; aures habent, et non audiunt; nares habent, et non odorabunt; manus habent, et non palpabunt; pedes habent, et non ambulabunt; similes ergo efficiuntur his, qui spem suae confidentiae ponunt in eis.'

Quomodo enim iuuandi quemlibet possunt habere uirtutem hi, qui ex corruptibili materia inferiorum etiam subpositorumque tibi manibus construuntur; quibus uidelicet artificium humanum adcommodans eis inanimatam membrorum similitudinem contulisti; qui, nisi a te moti fuerint, ambulare non poterunt, sed tamquam lapis in uno loco posita, ita constructi nihilque intellegentiae habentes, ipsaque insensibilitate obruti, nullam neque ledendi neque iuuandi facultatem adepti sunt? Qua ergo mentis deceptione eos deos, quibus uos ipsi imaginem corporis tradidistis, colentes sequimini, iudicio discreto repperire non possumus.

Unde oportet uos, suscepto signo sanctae crucis, per quod humanum genus redemptum est, execrandam diabolicae uersutiae supplantationem, qui diuinae bonitatis operibus inuidus aemulusque consistit, a cordibus uestris abicere, iniectisque manibus hos, quos eatenus materiae conpage uobis deos fabricastis, confringendos diminuendosque summopere procurate. Ipsa enim

eorum dissolutio corruptioque, quae numquam uiuentem spiritum habuit, nec sensibilitatem a suis factoribus potuit quolibet modo suscipere, uobis patenter insinuet, quam nihil erat, quod eatenus colebatis;

dum profecto meliores uos, qui spiritum uiuentem a Domino percepistis, eorum constructioni nihilominus existatis; quippe quos Deus omnipotens ex primi hominis, quem plasmavit, cognatione, deductis per saecula innumerabilibus propaginibus, pullulare constituit. Accedite ergo ad agnitionem eius, qui uos creauit, qui in uobis uitae insufflauit spiritum, qui pro uestra redemptione Filium suum unigenitum misit, ut uos ab originali peccato eriperet, et ereptos de potestate nequitiae diabolicae prauitatis caelestibus praemiis muneret.

Suscipite uerba praedicatorum, et euangelium Dei, quod uobis adnuntiant; quatinus credentes, sicut saepius dictum est, in Deum Patrem omnipotentem, et in Iesum Christum eius Filium, et Spiritum Sanctum, et inseparabilem Trinitatem; fugatis daemoniorum sensibus, expulsaque a uobis sollicitatione uenenosi et deceptibilis hostis, per aquam et Spiritum Sanctum renati ei, cui credideritis, in splendore gloriae sempiternae cohabitare, eius opitulante munificentia ualeatis.

Praeterea benedictionem protectoris uestri beati Petri apostolorum principis uobis direximus, id est camisia cum ornatura in auro una, et lena Anciriana una; quod petimus, ut eo benignitatis animo gloria uestra suscipiat, quo a nobis noscitur destinatum.

[11] Ad coniugem quoque illius Aedilbergam huiusmodi litteras idem pontifex misit:

Exemplar epistulae beatissimi et apostolici Bonifatii papae urbis Romae directae Aedilbergae reginae Aeduini regis.

Dominae gloriosae filiae Aedilbergae reginae, Bonifatius episcopus seruus seruorum Dei.

Redemptoris nostri benignitas humano generi, quod pretiosi sanguinis sui effusione a uinculis diabolicae captiuitatis eripuit, multae prouidentiae, quibus saluaretur, propinauit remedia;

quatinus sui nominis agnitionem diuerso modo gentibus innotescens, Creatorem suum suscepto Christianae fidei agnoscerent sacramento. Quod equidem in uestrae gloriae sensibus caelesti conlatum munere mystica regenerationis uestrae purgatio patenter innuit. Magno ergo largitatis dominicae beneficio mens nostra gaudio exultauit, quod scintillam orthodoxae religionis in uestri dignatus est confessione succendere; ex qua re non solum gloriosi coniugis uestri, immo totius gentis subpositae uobis intellegentiam in amore sui facilius inflammaret.

Didicimus namque referentibus his, qui ad nos gloriosi filii nostri Audubaldi regis laudabilem conuersionem nuntiantes peruenerunt, quod etiam uestra gloria, Christianae fidei suscepto mirabili sacramento, piis et Deo placitis iugiter operibus enitescat, ab idolorum etiam cultu seu fanorum auguriorumque inlcebris se diligenter absteineat, et ita in amore Redemptoris

sui inmutata deuotione persistens inuigilet, ut ad dilatandam Christianam fidem incessabiliter non desistat operam commodare; cumque de glorioso coniuge uestro paterna caritas sollicite perquisisset, cognouimus, quod eatenus abominandis idolis seruiens, ad suscipiendam uocem praedicatorum suam distulerit obedientiam exhibere. Qua ex re non modica nobis amaritudo congesta est, ab eo, quod pars corporis uestri ab agnitione summae et indiuiduae Trinitatis remansit extranea. Unde paternis officiis uestrae gloriosae Christianitati nostram commonitionem non distulimus conferendam; adhortantes, quatinus diuinae inspirationis inbuta subsidiis, inopportune et oportune agendum non differas, ut et ipse, Saluatoris nostri Domini Iesu Christi cooperante potentia, Christianorum numero copuletur; ut perinde intemerato societatis foedere iura teneas maritalis consortii. Scriptum namque est: 'Erunt duo in carne una.' Quomodo ergo unitas uobis coniunctionis inesse dici poterit, si a uestrae fidei splendore, interpositis detestabilis erroris tenebris, ille remanserit alienus?

Unde orationi continuae insistens a longanimitate caelestis clementiae inluminacionis ipsius beneficia inpetrare non desinas; ut uidelicet, quos copulatio carnalis affectus unum quodam modo corpus exhibuisse monstratur, hos quoque unitas fidei etiam post huius uitae transitum in perpetua societate conseruet. Insiste ergo, gloriosa filia, et summis conatibus duritiam cordis ipsius religiosa diuinorum praeceptorum insinuatione mollire summopere dematura;

infundens sensibus eius, quantum sit praeclarum, quod credendo suscepisti, mysterium, quantumue sit admirabile, quod renata praemium consequi meruisti. Frigiditatem cordis ipsius Sancti Spiritus adnuntiatione succende; quatinus amoto torpore perniciosissimi cultus, diuinae fidei calor eius intellegentiam tuarum adhortationum frequentatione succendat, ut profecto sacrae scripturae testimonium per te expletum indubitanter perclareat: 'Saluabitur uir infidelis per mulierem fidelem.' Ad hoc enim misericordiam dominicae pietatis consecuta es, ut fructum fidei creditorumque tibi beneficiorum Redemptori tuo multiplicem resignares. Quod equidem, suffragante praesidio benignitatis ipsius, ut explere ualeas, adsiduis non desistimus precibus postulare.

His ergo praemissis, paternae uobis dilectionis exhibentes officia, hortamur, ut nos reperta portitoris occasione de his, quae per uos superna potentia mirabiliter in conuersatione coniugis uestri summissaeque uobis gentis dignatus fuerit operari, prosperis quantocius nuntiis releuetis, quatinus sollicitudo nostra, quae de uestri uestrorumque omnium animae salute optabilia desideranter exspectat, uobis nuntiantibus releuetur, inlustrationemque diuinae propitiationis in uobis diffusam opulenter agnoscentes, hilari confessione largitori omnium bonorum Deo, et beato Petro apostolorum principi uberes merito gratias exsoluamus.

Praeterea benedictionem protectoris uestri beati Petri apostolorum principis uobis direximus, id est speculum argenteum, et pectinem eboreum inauratum;

quod petimus, ut eo benignitatis animo gloria uestra suscipiat, quo a nobis noscitur destinatum.

[12] Haec quidem memoratus papa Bonifatius de salute regis Aeduini ac gentis ipsius litteris agebat. Sed et oraculum caeleste, quod illi quondam exulanti apud Redualdum regem Anglorum pietas diuina reuelare dignata est, non minimum ad suscipienda uel intellegenda doctrinae monita salutaris sensum iuuit illius. Cum ergo uideret Paulinus difficulter posse sublimitatem animi regalis ad humilitatem uiae salutaris, et suscipiendum mysterium uiuificae crucis inclinari, ac pro salute illius simul et gentis, cui praeerat, et uerbo exhortationis apud homines, et apud diuinam pietatem uerbo deprecationis ageret; tandem, ut uerisimile uidetur, didicit in spiritu, quod uel quale esset oraculum regi quondam caelitus ostensum. Nec exinde distulit, quin continuo regem ammoneret explere uotum, quod in oraculo sibi exhibito se facturum promiserat, si temporis illius erumnis exemptus ad regni fastigia perueniret.

Erat autem oraculum huiusmodi. Cum persequente illum Aedilfrido, qui ante eum regnauit, per diuersa occultus loca uel regna multo annorum tempore profugus uagaretur, tandem uenit ad Redualdum obsecrans, ut uitam suam a tanti persecutoris insidiis tutando seruaret; qui libenter eum excipiens, promisit se, quae petebatur, esse facturum. At postquam Aedilfrid in hac eum prouincia apparuisse, et apud regem illius familiariter cum sociis habitare cognouit, misit nuntios, qui Redualdo pecuniam multam pro nece eius offerrent; neque aliquid profecit. Misit secundo, misit tertio, et copiosiora argenti dona offerens, et bellum insuper illi, si contemneretur, indicens. Qui uel minis fractus, uel corruptus muneribus, cessit deprecanti, et siue occidere se Aeduinum, seu legatariis tradere promisit. Quod ubi fidissimus quidam amicus illius animaduertit, intrauit cubiculum, quo dormire disponebat, erat enim prima hora noctis, et euocatum foras, quid erga eum agere rex promississet, edocuit, et insuper adiecit: ‘Si ergo uis, hac ipsa hora educam te de hac prouincia, et ea in loca introducam, ubi numquam te uel Reduald, uel Aedilfrid inuenire ualeant.’ Qui ait: ‘Gratias quidem ago beneuolentiae tuae;

non tamen hoc facere possum, quod suggeris, ut pactum, quod cum tanto rege ini, ipse primus irritum faciam, cum ille mihi nil mali fecerit, nil adhuc inimicitiarum intulerit. Quin potius, si moriturus sum, ille me magis quam ignobilior quisque morti tradat. Quo enim nunc fugiam, qui per omnes Britanniae prouincias tot annorum temporumque curriculis uagabundus hostium uitabam insidias?’

Abeunte igitur amico, remansit Aeduini solus foris, residensque mestus ante palatium, multis coepit cogitationum aestibus affici, quid ageret, quoque pedem uerteret, nescius.

Cumque diu tacitis mentis angoribus, et caeco carperetur igni, uidit subito intempesta nocte silentio adpropinquantem sibi hominem uultus habitusque incogniti; quem uidens, ut ignotum et inopinatum, non parum expauit. At ille accedens salutauit eum, et interrogauit, quare illa hora, ceteris quiescentibus,

et alto sopore pressis, solus ipse mestus in lapide peruigil sederet. At ille uicissim sciscitabatur, quid ad eum pertineret, utrum ipse intus an foris noctem transigeret. Qui respondens ait: 'Ne me aestimes tuae mestitiae et insomniorum, et forinsecae et solitariae sessionis causam nescire; scio enim certissime qui es, et quare meres, et quae uentura tibi in proximo mala formidas. Sed dicito mihi, quid mercedis dare uelis ei, siqui sit, qui his te meroribus absoluat, et Redualdo suadeat, ut nec ipse tibi aliquid mali faciat, nec tuis te hostibus perimendum tradat.' Qui cum se omnia, quae posset, huic tali pro mercede beneficii daturum esse responderet, adiecit ille: 'Quod si etiam regem te futurum extinctis hostibus in ueritate promittat, ita ut non solum omnes tuos progenitores, sed et omnes, qui ante te reges in gente Anglorum fuerant, potestate transcendas?' At Aeduini constantior interrogando factus, non dubitauit promittere, quin ei, qui tanta sibi beneficia donaret, dignis ipse gratiarum actionibus responderet. Tum ille tertio: 'Si autem,'

inquit, 'is, qui tibi tanta taliaque dona ueraciter aduentura praedixerit, etiam consilium tibi tuae salutis ac uitae melius atque utilius, quam aliquis de tuis parentibus aut cognatis umquam audiuit, ostendere potuerit, num ei obtemperare, et monita eius salutaria suscipere consentis?'

Nec distulit Aduini, quin continuo polliceretur in omnibus se secuturum doctrinam illius, qui se tot ac tantis calamitatibus ereptum, ad regni apicem prouheret. Quo accepto responso, confestim is, qui loquebatur cum eo, inposuit dexteram suam capiti eius dicens: 'Cum hoc ergo tibi signum aduenerit, memento huius temporis ac loquellae nostrae, et ea, quae nunc promittis, adimplere ne differas.' Et his dictis, ut ferunt, repente disparuit, ut intellegeret non hominem esse, qui sibi apparuisset, sed spiritum.

Et cum regius iuuenis solus adhuc ibidem sederet, gaudis quidem de conlata sibi consolatione, sed multum sollicitus, ac mente sedula cogitans, quis esset ille, uel unde ueniret, qui haec sibi loqueretur, uenit ad eum praefatus amicus illius, laetoque uultu salutans eum: 'Surge,'

inquit, 'intra, et sopitis ac relictis curarum anxietatibus, quieti membra simul et animum conpone, quia mutatum est cor regis, nec tibi aliquid mali facere, sed fidem potius pollicitam seruare disponit; postquam enim cogitationem suam, de qua tibi ante dixi, reginae in secreto reuelauit, reuocauit eum illa ab intentione, ammonens, quia nulla ratione conueniat tanto regi amicum suum optimum in necessitate positum auro uendere, immo fidem suam, quae omnibus ornamentis pretiosior est, amore pecuniae perdere.' Quid plura? Fecit rex, ut dictum est; nec solum exulem nuntiis hostilibus non tradidit, sed etiam eum, ut in regnum perueniret, adiunxit.

Nam mox redeuntibus domum nuntiis, exercitum ad debellandum Aedilfridum colligit copiosum, eumque sibi occurrentem cum exercitu multum inpari (non enim dederat illi spatium, quo totum suum congregaret atque adunaret exercitum), occidit in finibus gentis Merciorum ad orientalem plagam amnis, qui uocatur Idla; in quo certamine et filius Redualdi, uocabulo

Ragenheri, occisus est.

Ac sic Aeduini iuxta oraculum, quod acceperat, non tantum regis sibi infesti insidias uitauit, uerum etiam eidem peremto in regni gloriam successit.

Cum ergo praedicante uerbum Dei Paulino rex credere differret, et per aliquod tempus, ut diximus, horis competentibus solitarius sederet, quid agendum sibi esset, quae religio sequenda, sedulus secum ipse scrutari consuesset, ingrediens ad eum quadam die uir Dei, inposuit dexteram capiti eius et, an hoc signum agnosceret, requisiiuit. Qui cum tremens ad pedes eius procidere uellet, leuauit eum, et quasi familiari uoce affatus: ‘Ecce,’

inquit, ‘hostium manus, quos timuisti, Domino donante euasisti; ecce regnum, quod desiderasti, ipso largiente percepisti. Memento, ut tertium, quod promisisti, facere ne differas, suscipiendo fidem eius, et praecepta seruando, qui te et a temporalibus aduersis eripiens, temporalis regni honore sublimauit; et si deinceps uoluntati eius, quam per me tibi praedicat, obsecundare uolueris, etiam a perpetuis malorum tormentis te liberans, aeterni secum regni in caelis faciet esse participem.’

[13] Quibus auditis, rex suscipere quidem se fidem, quam docebat, et uelle et debere respondebat. Uerum adhuc cum amicis principibus et consiliariis suis sese de hoc conlaturum esse dicebat, ut, si et illi eadem cum illo sentire uellent, omnes pariter in fonte uitae Christo consecrarentur. Et adnuente Paulino, fecit, ut dixerat. Habito enim cum sapientibus consilio, sciscitabatur singillatim ab omnibus, qualis sibi doctrina haec eatenus inaudita, et nouus diuinitatis, qui praedicabatur, cultus uideretur.

Cui primus pontificum ipsius Coifi continuo respondit: ‘Tu uide, rex, quale sit hoc, quod nobis modo praedicatur; ego autem tibi uerissime, quod certum didici, profiteor, quia nihil omnino uirtutis habet, nihil utilitatis religio illa, quam hucusque tenuimus. Nullus enim tuorum studiosius quam ego culturae deorum nostrorum se subdidit; et nihilominus multi sunt, qui ampliora a te beneficia quam ego, et maiores accipiunt dignitates, magisque prosperantur in omnibus, quae agenda uel acquirenda disponunt. Si autem dii aliquid ualerent, me potius iuuare uellent, qui illis inpensius seruire curauit. Unde restat, ut si ea, quae nunc nobis noua praedicantur, meliora esse et fortiora, habita examinatione perspexeris, absque ullo cunctamine suscipere illa festinemus.’

Cuius suasioni uerbisque prudentibus alius optimatum regis tribuens assensum, continuo subdidit: ‘Talis,’ inquit, ‘mihi uidetur, rex, uita hominum praesens in terris, ad conparationem eius, quod nobis incertum est, temporis, quale cum te residente ad caenam cum ducibus ac ministris tuis tempore brumali, accenso quidem foco in medio, et calido effecto caenaculo, furentibus autem foris per omnia turbinibus hiemalium pluuiarum uel niuium, adueniens unus passeium domum citissime peruolauerit; qui cum per unum ostium ingrediens, mox per aliud exierit. Ipso quidem tempore, quo intus est, hiemis tempestate non tangitur, sed tamen paruissimo spatio serenitatis ad momentum excursu, mox de hieme in hiemem regrediens, tuis oculis elabitur. Ita haec uita hominum ad modicum apparet; quid autem sequatur, quidue

praecesserit, prorsus ignoramus. Unde si haec noua doctrina certius aliquid attulit, merito esse sequenda uidetur.’ His similia et ceteri maiores natu ac regis consiliarii diuinitus admoniti prosequerantur.

Adiecit autem Coifi, quia uellet ipsum Paulinum diligentius audire de Deo, quem praedicabat, uerbum facientem. Quod cum iubente rege faceret, exclamauit auditis eius sermonibus dicens: ‘Iam olim intellexeram nihil esse, quod colebamus; quia uidelicet, quanto studiosius in eo cultu ueritatem quaerebam, tanto minus inueniebam.

Nunc autem aperte profiteor, quia in hac praedicatione ueritas claret illa, quae nobis uitae, salutis, et beatitudinis aeternae dona ualeat tribuere. Unde suggero, rex, ut templa et altaria, quae sine fructu utilitatis sacrauimus, ocius anathemati et igni contradamus.’ Quid plura? praebuit palam ad sensum euangelizanti beato Paulino rex, et, abrenuntiata idolatria, fidem se Christi suscipere confessus est. Cumque a praefato pontifice sacrorum suorum quaereret, quis aras et fana idolorum cum septis, quibus erant circumdata, primus profanare deberet; ille respondit: ‘Ego. Quis enim ea, quae per stultitiam colui, nunc ad exemplum omnium aptius quam ipse per sapientiam mihi a Deo uero donatam destruum?’

Statimque, abiecta superstitione uanitatis, rogauit sibi regem arma dare et equum emissarium, quem ascendens ad idola destruenda ueniret. Non enim licuerat pontificem sacrorum uel arma ferre, uel praeter in equa equitare. Accinctus ergo gladio accepit lanceam in manu, et ascendens emissarium regis, pergebat ad idola. Quod aspiciens uulgus, aestimabat eum insanire. Nec distulit ille, mox ut adpropinquabat ad fanum, profanare illud, iniecta in eo lancea, quam tenebat; multumque gauisus de agnitione ueri Dei cultus, iussit sociis destruere ac succendere fanum cum omnibus septis suis.

Ostenditur autem locus ille quondam idolorum non longe ab Eburaco ad orientem, ultra amnem Doruentionem, et uocatur hodie Godmunddingaham, ubi pontifex ipse, inspirante Deo uero, polluit ac destruxit eas, quas ipse sacrauerat, aras.

[14] Igitur accepit rex Aeduini cum cunctis gentis suae nobilibus ac plebe per plurima fidem et lauacrum sanctae regenerationis anno regni sui XI, qui est annus dominicae incarnationis DCXXVII, ab aduentu uero Anglorum in Britanniam annus circiter CLXXXmus. Baptizatus est autem Eburaci die sancto paschae pridie Iduum Aprilium in ecclesia Petri apostoli, quam ibidem ipse de ligno, cum cathecizaretur, atque ad percipiendum baptismum inbueretur, citato opere construxit. In qua etiam ciuitate ipsi doctori atque antistiti suo Paulino sedem episcopatus donauit. Mox autem ut baptismum consecutus est, curauit, docente eodem Paulino, maiorem ipso in loco et augustiorem de lapide fabricare basilicam, in cuius medio ipsum, quod prius fecerat, oratorium includeretur. Praeparatis ergo fundamentis in gyro prioris oratorii per quadrum coepit aedificare basilicam. Sed priusquam altitudo parietis esset consummata, rex ipse impia nece occisus, opus idem successoris suo Osualdo perficiendum reliquit. Paulinus autem ex eo tempore sex annis continuus, id

est ad finem usque imperii regis illius, uerbum Dei, adnuente ac fauente ipso, in ea prouincia praedicabat; credebantque et baptizabantur quotquot erant praeordinati ad uitam aeternam, in quibus erant Osfrid et Eadfrid filii regis Aeduini, qui ambo ei exuli nati sunt de Quoenburga filia Cearli regis Merciorum.

Baptizati sunt tempore sequente et alii liberi eius de Aedilberga regina progeniti, Aedilhun et Aedilthryd filia, et alter filius Uuscfrea, quorum primi albatu adhuc rapti sunt de hac uita, et Eburaci in ecclesia sepulti. Baptizatus et Yffi filius Osfridi, sed et alii nobiles ac regii uiri non pauci. Tantum autem fertur tunc fuisse feruor fidei ac desiderium lauacri salutaris genti Nordanhymbrorum, ut quodam tempore Paulinus ueniens cum rege et regina in uillam regiam, quae uocatur Adgefrin, XXXVI diebus ibidem cum eis cathecizandi et baptizandi officio deditus moraretur; quibus diebus cunctis a mane usque ad uesperam nil aliud ageret, quam confluentem eo de cunctis uiculis ac locis plebem Christi uerbo salutis instruere, atque instructam in fluuio Gleni, qui proximus erat, lauacro remissionis abluere. Haec uilla tempore sequentium regum deserta, et alia pro illa est facta in loco, qui uocatur Maelmin.

Haec quidem in prouincia Berniciorum; sed et in prouincia Deirorum, ubi saepius manere cum rege solebat, baptizabat in fluuio Sualua, qui uicum Cataractam praeterfluit. Nondum enim oratoria uel baptisteria in ipso exordio nascentis ibi ecclesiae poterant aedificari. Attamen in Campodono, ubi tunc etiam uilla regia erat, fecit basilicam, quam postmodum pagani, a quibus Aeduini rex occisus est, cum tota eadem uilla succenderunt; pro qua reges posteriores fecere sibi uillam in regione, quae uocatur Loidis. Euasit autem ignem altare, quia lapideum erat; et seruatur adhuc in monasterio reuerentissimi abbatis et presbyteri Thryduulfi, quod est in silua Elmete.

[15] Tamtum autem deuotionis Aeduini erga cultum ueritatis habuit, ut etiam regi Orientalium Anglorum, Earpualdo filio Redualdi, persuaderet, relictis idolorum superstitionibus, fidem et sacramenta Christi cum sua prouincia suscipere. Et quidem pater eius Reduald iamdudum in Cantia sacramentis Christianae fidei inbutus est, sed frustra; nam rediens domum ab uxore sua et quibusdam peruersis doctoribus seductus est, atque a sinceritate fidei deprauatus habuit posteriora peiora prioribus; ita ut in morem antiquorum Samaritanorum et Christo seruire uideretur et diis, quibus antea seruiebat; atque in eodem fano et altare haberet ad sacrificium Christi, et arulam ad uictimas daemoniorum. Quod uidelicet fanum rex eiusdem prouinciae Alduulf, qui nostra aetate fuit, usque ad suum tempus perdurasse, et se in pueritia uidisse testabatur.

Erat autem praefatus rex Reduald natus nobilis, quamlibet actu ignobilis, filius Tytili, cuius pater fuit Uuffa, a quo reges Orientalium Anglorum Uuffingas appellant.

Uerum Eorpuald non multo, postquam fidem accepit, tempore occisus est a uiro gentili nomine Ricbercto; et exinde tribus annis prouincia in errore

uersata est, donec accepit regnum frater eiusdem Eorpualdi Sigberct, uir per omnia Christianissimus ac doctissimus, qui, uiuente adhuc fratre, cum exularet in Gallia, fidei sacramentis inbutus est, quorum participem, mox ubi regnare coepit, totam suam prouinciam facere curauit. Cuius studiis gloriosissime fauit Felix episcopus, qui de Burgundiorum partibus, ubi ortus et ordinatus est, cum uenisset ad Honorium archiepiscopum, eique indicasset desiderium suum, misit eum ad praedicandum uerbum uitae praefatae nationi Anglorum. Nec uota ipsius in cassum cecidere; quin potius fructum in ea multiplicem credentium populorum pius agri spiritualis cultor inuenit. Siquidem totam illam prouinciam, iuxta sui nominis sacramentum, a longa iniquitate atque infelicitate liberatam, ad fidem et opera iustitiae, ac perpetuae felicitatis dona perduxit, accepitque sedem episcopatus in ciuitate Domnoc; et cum X ac VII annos eidem prouinciae pontificali regimine praeesset, ibidem in pace uitam finiuit.

[16] Preadicabat autem Paulinus uerbum etiam prouinciae Lindissi, quae est prima ad meridianam Humbre fluminis ripam, pertingens usque ad mare, praefectumque Lindocolinae ciuitatis, cui nomen erat Blaecca, primum cum domu sua conuertit ad Dominum. In qua uidelicet ciuitate et ecclesiam operis egregii de lapide fecit; cuius tecto uel longa incuria, uel hostili manu deiecto, parietes hactenus stare uidentur, et omnibus annis aliqua sanitatum miracula in eodem loco solent ad utilitatem eorum, qui fideliter quaerunt, ostendi. In qua ecclesia Paulinus, transeunte ad Christum Iusto, Honorium pro eo consecrauit episcopum, ut in sequentibus suo loco dicemus.

De huius fide prouinciae narrauit mihi presbyter et abbas quidam uir ueracissimus de monasterio Peartaneu, uocabulo Deda, retulisse sibi quendam seniore, baptizatum se fuisse die media a Paulino episcopo, praesente rege atduino, et multam populi turbam in fluuio Treenta, iuxta ciuitatem, quae lingua Anglorum Tiouulfigacastir uocatur; qui etiam effigiem eiusdem Paulini referre esset solitus, quod esset uir longae staturae, paululum incuruus, nigro capillo, facie macilenta, naso adunco pertenui, uenerabilis simul et terribilis aspectu.

Habuit autem secum in ministerio et Iacobum diaconum, uirum utique industrium ac nobilem in Christo et in ecclesia, qui ad nostra usque tempora permansit.

Tanta autem eo tempore pax in Britannia, quaquauersum imperium regis arduini peruenerat, fuisse perhibetur, ut, sicut usque hodie in prouerbio dicitur, etiam si mulier una cum recens nato paruulo uellet totam perambulare insulam a mari ad mare, nullo se ledente ualeret. Tantum rex idem utilitati suae gentis consuluit, ut plerisque in locis, ubi fontes lucidos iuxta puplicos uiarum transitus conspexit, ibi ob refrigerium uiantium, erectis stipitibus, aereos caucos suspendi iuberet, neque hos quisquam, nisi ad usum necessarium, contingere prae magnitudine uel timoris eius auderet, uel amoris uellet. Tantum uero in regno excellentiae habuit, ut non solum in pugna ante illum uexilla gestarentur, sed et tempore pacis equitantem inter ciuitates siue

uillas aut prouincias suas cum ministris, semper antecedere signifer consuesset; nec non et incedente illo ubilibet per plateas, illud genus uexilli, quod Romani tufam, Angli appellant thuuf, ante eum ferri solebat.

[17] Quo tempore praesulatum sedis apostolicae Honorius Bonifatii successor habebat, qui, ubi gentem Nordanhymbrorum cum suo rege ad fidem confessionemque Christi, Paulino euangelizante, conuersam esse didicit, misit eidem Paulino pallium; misit et regi atduino litteras exhortatorias, paterna illum caritate accendens, ut in fide ueritatis, quam acceperant, persistere semper ac proficere curarent.

Quarum uidelicet litterarum iste est ordo:

Domino excellentissimo atque praecellentissimo filio atduino regi Anglorum Honorius episcopus seruus seruorum Dei salutem.

Ita Christianitatis uestrae integritas circa sui conditoris cultum fidei est ardore succensa, ut longe lateque resplendeat, et in omni mundo adnuntiata uestri operis multipliciter referat fructum. Sic enim uos reges esse cognoscitis, dum regem et Creatorem uestrum orthodoxa praedicatione cdocti Deum uenerando creditis, eique, quod humana ualet condicio, mentis uestrae sinceram deuotionem exsoluitis. Quod enim Deo nostro aliud offerre ualebimus, nisi ut in bonis actibus persistentes, ipsumque auctorem humani generis confitentes, eum colere, eique uota nostra reddere festinemus? Et ideo, excellentissime fili, paterna uos caritate, qua conuenit, exhortamur, ut hoc, quod uos diuina misericordia ad suam gratiam uocare dignata est, sollicita intentione et adsiduis orationibus seruare omnimodo festinetis; ut, qui uos in praesenti saeculo ex omni errore absolutos ad agnitionem sui nominis est dignatus perducere, et caelestis patriae uobis praeparet mansionem.

Praedicatoris igitur uestri domini mei apostolicae memoriae Gregorii frequenter lectione occupati, prae oculis affectum doctrinae ipsius, quem pro uestris animabus libenter exercuit, habetote; quatinus eius oratio et regnum uestrum populumque augeat, et uos omnipotenti Deo inreprehensibiles repraesentet. Ea uero, quae a nobis pro uestris sacerdotibus ordinanda sperastis, haec pro fidei uestrae sinceritate, quae nobis multimoda relatione per praesentium portitores laudabiliter insinuata est, gratuito animo adtribuere ulla sine dilatione praeuidemus; et duo pallia utrorumque metropolitanorum, id est Honorio et Paulino, direximus, ut, dum quis eorum de hoc saeculo ad auctorem suum fuerit arcessitus, in loco ipsius alter episcopum ex hac nostra auctoritate debeat subrogare.

Quod quidem tam pro uestrae caritatis affectu, quam pro tantarum prouinciarum spatiis, quae inter nos et uos esse noscuntur, sumus inuitati concedere, ut in omnibus deuotioni uestrae nostrum concursus, et iuxta uestra desideria praeberemus.

Incolumem excellentiam uestram gratia superna custodiat.

[18] Haec inter Iustus archiepiscopus ad caelestia regna subleuatus quarto Iduum Nouembrium die, et Honorius pro illo est in praesulatum electus; qui ordinandus uenit ad Paulinum, et occurrente sibi illo in Lindocolino, quintus

ab Augustino Doruuernensis ecclesiae consecratus est antistes. Cui etiam praefatus papa Honorius misit pallium et litteras, in quibus decernit hoc ipsum, quod in epistula ad Aeduinum regem missa decreuerat; scilicet ut cum Doruuernensis uel Eburacensis antistes de hac uita transierit, is, qui superest, consors eiusdem gradus habeat potestatem alterum ordinandi in loco eius, qui transierat, sacerdotem; ne sit necesse ad Romanam usque ciuitatem per tam prolixa terrarum et maris spatia pro ordinando archiepiscopo sempor fatigari. Quarum etiam textum litterarum in nostra hac historia ponere commodum duximus.

Dilectissimo fratri Honorio Honorius.

Inter plurima, quae Redemptoris nostri misericordia suis famulis dignatur bonorum munera praerogare, illud etiam clementer conlata suae pietatis munificentia tribuit, quoties per fraternos affatus unianimam dilectionem quadam contemplatione alternis aspectibus repraesentat. Pro quibus maiestati eius gratias indesinenter exsoluimus, eumque uotis supplicibus exoramus, ut uestram dilectionem in praedicatione euangelii elaborantem et fructificantem, sectantemque magistri et capitis sui sancti Gregorii regulam, perpeti stabilitate confirmet, et ad augmentum ecclesiae suae potiora per uos suscitet incrementa; ut fide et opere, in timore Dei et caritate, uestra acquisitio decessorumque uestrorum, quae per domini Gregorii exordia pullulat, conualescendo amplius extendatur; ut ipsa uos dominici eloquii promissa in futuro respiciant, uosque uox ista ad aeternam festiuitatem euocet: ‘Uenite ad me omnes, qui laboratis et onerati estis, et ego reficiam uos;’

et iterum: ‘Euge, serue bone et fidelis; quia super pauca fuisti fidelis, super multa te constituam; intra in gaudium Domini tui.’ Et nos equidem, fratres carissimi, haec uobis pro aeterna caritate exhortationis uerba praemittentes, quae rursus pro ecclesiarum uestrarum priuilegiis congruere posse conspiciamus, non desistimus inpertire.

Et tam iuxta uestram petitionem, quam filiorum nostrorum regum uobis per praesentem nostram praeceptionem, uice beati Petri apostolorum principis, auctoritatem tribuimus, ut quando unum ex uobis diuina ad se iusserit gratia euocari, is, qui superstes fuerit, alterum in loco defuncti debeat episcopum ordinare. Pro qua etiam re singula uestrae dilectioni pallia pro eadem ordinatione celebranda direximus, ut per nostrae praeceptionis auctoritatem possitis Deo placitam ordinationem efficere; quia, ut haec uobis concederemus, longa terrarum marisque interualla, quae inter nos ac uos obsistunt, ad haec nos condescendere coegerunt, ut nulla possit ecclesiarum uestrarum iactura per cuiuslibet occasionis obtentum quoquo modo prouenire; sed potius commissi uobis populi deuotionem plenius propagare Deus te incolumem custodiat, dilectissime frater.

Data die III Iduum Iunii, imperantibus dominis nostris Augustis, Heraclio anno XXoIIIo, post consulatum eiusdem anno XXoIIIo, atque Constantino filio ipsius anno uicesimo tertio, et consulatus eius anno IIIo; sed et Heraclio felicissimo Caesare id est filio eius anno III, indictione VII, id est anno

dominicæ incarnationis DCXXXIII.

[19] Misit idem papa Honorius litteras etiam genti Scottorum, quos in obseruatione sancti paschæ errasse conpererat, iuxta quod supra docuimus; sollerter exhortans, ne paucitatem suam in extremis terræ finibus constitutam, sapientiozem antiquis siue modernis, quæ per orbem erant, Christi ecclesiis aestimarent; neue contra paschales computos, et decreta synodaliū totius orbis pontificum aliud pascha celebrarent.

Sed et Iohannes, qui successori eiusdem Honorii Seuerino successit, cum adhuc esset electus in pontificatum, pro eodem errore corrigendo litteras eis magna auctoritate atque eruditione plenas direxit;

euidenter astruens, quia dominicum paschæ diem a XVa luna usque ad XXIam, quod in Nicena synodo probatum est, oportet inquiri. Necnon pro Pelagiana heresi, quam apud eos reuiuescere didicerat, cauenda ac repellenda, in eadem illos epistula admonere curauit; cuius epistolæ principium est:

Dilectissimis et sanctissimis Tomiano, Columbano, Cromano, Dinnao, et Baithano episcopis; Cromano, Ernianoque, Laistrano, Scellano, et Segeno presbyteris; Sarano ceterisque doctoribus seu abbatibus Scottis, Hilarus archipresbyter et seruans locum sanctæ sedis apostolicæ, Iohannes diaconus et in Dei nomine electus; item Iohannes primicerius et seruans locum sanctæ sedis apostolicæ, et Iohannes seruus Dei, consiliarius eiusdem apostolicæ sedis.

Scripta, quæ perlatores ad sanctæ memoriæ Seuerinum papam adduxerunt, eo de hac luce migrante, reciproca responsa ad ea, quæ postulata fuerant, siluerunt. Quibus reseratis, ne diu tantæ quaestionis caligo indiscussa remaneret, repperimus quosdam prouinciæ uestrae contra orthodoxam fidem, nouam ex ueteri heresim renouare conantes, pascha nostrum, in quo immolatus est Christus, nebulosa caligine refutantes, et XIII luna cum Hebreis celebrare nitentes.

Quo epistolæ principio manifeste declaratur, et nuperrime temporibus illis hanc apud eos heresim exortam, et non totam eorum gentem, sed quosdam in eis hac fuisse implicitos.

Exposita autem ratione paschalis obseruantiae, ita de Pelagianis in eadem epistula subdunt:

Et hoc quoque cognouimus, quod uirus Pelagianæ hereseos apud uos denuo reuiuescit; quod omnino hortamur, ut a uestris mentibus huiusmodi uenenatum superstitionis facinus auferatur. Nam qualiter ipsa quoque execranda heresis damnata est, latere uos non debet;

quia non solum per istos CC annos abolita est, sed et cotidie a nobis perpetuo anathemate sepulta damnatur; et hortamur, ne, quorum arma conbusta sunt, apud uos eorum cineres suscitentur. Nam quis non excretur superbum eorum conamen et impium, dicentium posse sine peccato hominem existere ex propria uoluntate, et non ex gratia Dei?

Et primum quidem blasphemiae stultiloquium est dicere esse hominem sine peccato; quod omnino non potest, nisi unus mediator Dei et hominum homo

Christus Iesus, qui sine peccato est conceptus et partus. Nam ceteri homines cum peccato originali nascentes testimonium praeuaricationis Adae, etiam sine actuali peccato existentes, portare noscuntur, secundum prophetam dicentem: ‘Ecce enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum, et in peccatis peperit me mater mea.’

[20] At uero Aeduini cum X et VII annis genti Anglorum simul et Brettonum gloriosissime praeesset, e quibus sex etiam ipse, ut diximus, Christi regno militauit, rebellauit aduersus eum Caedualla rex Brettonum, auxilium praebente illi Penda uiro strenuissimo de regio genere Merciorum, qui et ipse ex eo tempore gentis eiusdem regno annis XX et Iibus uaria sorte praefuit; et conserto graui proelio in campo, qui uocatur Haethfelth, occisus est atduini die IIII Iduum Octobrium, anno dominicae incarnationis DCXXXIII, cum esset annorum XL et VIII; eiusque totus uel interemtus uel dispersus est exercitus. In quo etiam bello ante illum unus filius eius Osfrid iuuenis bellicosus cecidit, alter Eadfrid necessitate cogente ad Pendam regem transfugit, et ab eo postmodum, regnante Osualdo, contra fidem iuris iurandi peremtus est.

Quo tempore maxima est facta strages in ecclesia uel gente Nordanhymbrorum, maxime quod unus ex ducibus, a quibus acta est, paganus, alter, quia barbarus erat pagano saeuior. Siquidem Penda cum omni Merciorum gente idolis deditus, et Christiani erat nominis ignarus; at uero Caedualla, quamuis nomen et professionem haberet Christiani, adeo tamen erat animo ac moribus barbarus, ut ne sexui quidem muliebri, uel innocuae paruulorum parceret aetati, quin uniuersos atrocitate ferina morti per tormenta contraderet, multo tempore totas eorum prouincias debacchando peruagatus, ac totum genus Anglorum Britanniae finibus erasurum se esse deliberans. Sed nec religioni Christianae, quae apud eos exorta erat, aliquid inpendebat honoris. Quippe cum usque hodie moris sit Brettonum, fidem religionemque Anglorum pro nihil habere, neque in aliquo eis magis communicare quam paganis. Adlatum est autem caput Aeduini regis Eburacum, et inlatum postea in ecclesiam beati apostoli Petri, quam ipse coepit, sed successor eius Osuald perfecit, ut supra docuimus, positum est in porticu sancti papae Gregorii, a cuius ipse discipulis uerbum uitae susceperat.

Turbatis itaque rebus Nordanhymbrorum huius articulo cladis, cum nil alicubi praesidii nisi in fuga esse uideretur, Paulinus adsumta secum regina Aedilberge, quam pridem adduxerat, rediit Cantiam nauigio, atque ab Honorio archiepiscopo et rege Eadbaldo multum honorifice susceptus est. Uenit autem illuc duce Basso milite regis Aeduini fortissimo, habens secum Eanfledam filiam, et Uuscfrean filium atduini, nec non et Yffi filium Osfridi filii eius, quos postea mater metu Eadbaldi et Osualdi regum misit in Galliam nutriendos regi Daegberecto, qui erat amicus illius, ibique ambo in infantia defuncti, et iuxta honorem uel regiis pueris uel innocentibus Christi congruum in ecclesia sepulti sunt. Attulit quoque secum uasa pretiosa Aeduini regis perplura, in quibus et crucem magnam auream, et calicem aureum

consecratum ad ministerium altaris, quae hactenus in ecclesia Cantiae conservata monstrantur.

Quo in tempore Hrofensis ecclesia pastorem minime habebat, eo quod Romanus praesul illius ad Honorium papam a Iusto archiepiscopo legatarius missus absortus fuerat fluctibus Italici maris; ac per hoc curam illius praefatus Paulinus inuitatione Honorii antistitis et Eadbaldi regis suscepit ac tenuit, usque dum et ipse suo tempore ad caelestia regna cum gloriosi fructu laboris ascendit. In qua ecclesia moriens pallium quoque, quod a Romano papa acceperat, reliquit.

Reliquerat autem in ecclesia sua Eburaci Iacobum diaconum, uirum utique ecclesiasticum et sanctum, qui multo exhinc tempore in ecclesia manens, magnas antiquo hosti praedas docendo et baptizando eripuit; cuius nomine uicus, in quo maxime solebat habitare, iuxta Cataractam, usque hodie cognominatur. Qui, quoniam cantandi in ecclesia erat peritissimus, recuperata postmodum pace in prouincia, et crescente numero fidelium, etiam magister ecclesiasticae cantionis iuxta morem Romanorum siue Cantuariorum multis coepit existere; et ipse senex ac plenus dierum, iuxta scripturas, patrum uiam secutus est.

LIBER TERTIUS

[1] At interfecto in pugna Aduino, suscepit pro illo regnum Deirorum, de qua prouincia ille generis prosapiam et primordia regni habuerat, filius patruī eius Aelfrici, uocabulo Osric, qui ad praedicationem Paulini fidei erat sacramentis inbutus. Porro regnum Berniciorum, nam in has duas prouincias gens Nordanhymbrorum antiquitus diuisa erat, suscepit filius Aedilfridi, qui de illa prouincia generis et regni originem duxerat, nomine Eanfrid. Siquidem tempore toto, quo regnauit Aduini, filii praefati regis Aedilfridi, qui ante illum regnauerat, cum magna nobilium iuuentute apud Scottos siue Pictos exulabant, ibique ad doctrinam Scottorum cathecizati, et baptismatis sunt gratia recreati. Qui ut, mortuo rege inimico, patriam sunt redire permissi, accepit primus eorum, quem diximus, Eanfrid regnum Berniciorum. Qui uterque rex, ut terreni regni infulas sortitus est, sacramenta regni caelestis, quibus initiatus erat, anathematizando prodidit, ac se priscis idolatriae sordibus polluumdum perdendumque restituit.

Nec mora, utrumque rex Brettonum Ceadualla impia manu, sed iusta ultione peremit. Et primo quidem proxima aestate Osricum, dum se in oppido municipio temerarie obsedisset, erumpens subito cum suis omnibus inparatum cum toto exercitu deleuit. Dein cum anno integro prouincias Nordanhymbrorum, non ut rex uictor possideret, sed quasi tyrannus saeuens disperderet, ac tragica caede dilaceraret, tandem Eanfridum inconsulte ad se cum XII lectis militibus postulandae pacis gratia uenientem, simili sorte damnauit. Infaustus ille annus, et omnibus bonis exosus usque hodie permanet, tam propter apostasiam regum Anglorum, qua se fidei sacramentis exuerant, quam propter uesanam Brettonici regis tyrannidem. Unde cunctis placuit regum tempora computantibus, ut, ablata de medio regum perfidorum memoria, idem annus sequentis regis, id est Osualdi, uiri Deo dilecti, regno adsignaretur; quo, post occisionem fratris Eanfridi, superueniente cum paruo exercitu, sed fide Christi munito, infandus Brettonum dux cum inmensis illis copiis, quibus nihil resistere posse iactabat, interemtus est in loco, qui lingua Anglorum Denisesburna, id est riuus Denisi, uocatur.

[2] Ostennditur autem usque hodie, et in magna ueneratione habetur locus ille, ubi uenturus ad hanc pugnam Osuald signum sanctae crucis erexit, ac flexis genibus Deum deprecatus est, ut in tanta rerum necessitate suis cultoribus caelesti succurreret auxilio. Denique fertur, quia facta citato opere cruce, ac fouea praeparata, in qua statui deberet, ipse fide feruens hanc arripuerit, ac foueae inposuerit, atque utraque manu erectam tenuerit, donec adgesto a militibus puluere terrae figeretur; et hoc facto, elata in altum uoce cuncto exercitui proclamauerit: ‘Flectamus omnes genua, et Deum omnipotentem, uiuum, ac uerum in commune deprecemur, ut nos ab hoste superbo ac feroce sua miseratione defendat; scit enim ipse, quia iusta pro salute gentis nostrae bella suscepimus.’ Fecerunt omnes, ut iusserat, et sic

incipiente diluculo in hostem progressi, iuxta meritum suae fidei uictoria potiti sunt. In cuius loco orationis innumerae uirtutes sanitatum noscuntur esse patratae, ad indicium uidelicet ac memoriam fidei regis. Nam et usque hodie multi de ipso ligno sacrosanctae crucis astulas excidere solent, quas cum in aquas miserint, eisque languentes homines aut pecudes potauerint, siue asperserint, mox sanitati restituntur.

Uocatur locus ille lingua Anglorum Hefenfelth, quod dici potest latine caelestis campus, quod certo utique praesagio futurorum antiquitus nomen accepit; significans nimirum, quod ibidem caeleste erigendum tropaeum, caelestis inchoanda uictoria, caelestia usque hodie forent miracula celebranda. Est autem locus iuxta murum illum ad aquilonem, quo Romani quondam ob arcendos barbarorum impetus totam a mari ad mare praecinxere Britanniam, ut supra docuimus. In quo uidelicet loco consuetudinem multo iam tempore fecerant fratres Hagustaldensis ecclesiae, quae non longe abest, aduenientes omni anno pridie quam postea idem rex Osuald occisus est, uigilias pro salute animae eius facere, plurimaeque psalmorum laude celebrata, uictimam pro eo mane sacrae oblationis offerre. Qui etiam crescente bona consuetudine, nuper ibidem ecclesia constructa, sacratiorem et cunctis honorabiliorem omnibus locum fecere. Nec inmerito, quia nullum, ut conperimus, fidei Christianae signum, nulla ecclesia, nullum altare in tota Berniciorum gente erectum est, priusquam hoc sacrae crucis uexillum nouus militiae dux, dictante fidei deuotione, contra hostem inmanissimum pugnaturus statueret.

Nec ab re est unum e pluribus, quae ad hanc crucem patrata sunt, uirtutis miraculum enarrare. Quidam de fratribus eiusdem Hagustaldensis ecclesiae, nomine Bothelm qui nunc usque superest, ante paucos annos, dum incautius forte noctu in glacie incederet, repente conruens, brachium contriuit, ac grauissima fracturae ipsius coepit molestia fatigari; ita ut ne ad os quidem adducere ipsum brachium ullatenus dolore arcente ualeret. Qui cum die quadam mane audiret unum de fratribus ad locum eiusdem sanctae crucis ascendere disposuisse, rogauit, ut aliquam sibi partem de illo ligno uenerabili rediens adferret, credere se dicens, quia per hoc, donante Domino, salutem posset consequi. Fecit ille, ut rogatus est, et reuersus ad uesperam, sedentibus iam ad mensam fratribus, obtulit ei aliquid de ueteri musco, quo superficies ligni erat obsita. Qui cum sedens ad mensam non haberet ad manum, ubi oblatum sibi munus reponeret, misit hoc in sinum sibi. Et dum iret cubitum, oblitus hoc alicubi deponere, permisit suo in sinu permanere. At medio noctis tempore, cum euigilaret, sensit nescio quid frigidi suo lateri adiacere, admotaque manu requirere quid esset, ita sanum brachium manumque repperit, ac si nihil umquam tanti langoris habuisset.

[3] Idem ergo Osuald, mox ubi regnum suscepit, desiderans totam, cui praeesse coepit, gentem fidei Christianae gratia inbui, cuius experimenta permaxima in expugnandis barbaris iam ceperat, misit ad maiores natu Scottorum, inter quos exulans ipse baptismatis sacramenta cum his, qui secum erant, militibus consecutus erat;

petens, ut sibi mitteretur antistes, cuius doctrina ac ministerio gens, quam regebat, Anglorum, dominicae fidei et dona disceret, et susciperet sacramenta. Neque aliquanto tardius, quod petiit, inpetrauit; accepit namque pontificem Aedanum summae mansuetudinis, et pietatis, ac moderaminis uirum, habentemque zelum Dei, quamuis non plene secundum scientiam. Namque diem paschae dominicum more suae gentis, cuius saepius mentionem fecimus, a XIIIa luna usque ad XXam obseruare solebat. Hoc etenim ordine septentrionalis Scottorum prouincia, et omnis natio Pictorum illo adhuc tempore pascha dominicum celebrabat, aestimans se in hac obseruantia sancti ac laude digni patris Anatolii scripta secutam. Quod an uerum sit, peritus quisque facillime cognoscit. Porro gentes Scottorum, quae in australibus Hiberniae insulae partibus morabantur, iamdudum ad admonitionem apostolicae sedis antistitis, pascha canonico ritu obseruare didicerunt.

Uenienti igitur ad se episcopo, rex locum sedis episcopalis in insula Lindisfarnensi, ubi ipse petebat, tribuit. Qui uidelicet locus accedente ac recedente reumate, bis cotidie instar insulae maris circumluitur undis, bis renudato littore contiguus terrae redditur; atque eius admonitionibus humiliter ac libenter in omnibus auscultans, ecclesiam Christi in regno suo multum diligenter aedificare ac dilatare curauit. Ubi pulcherrimo saepe spectaculo contigit, ut euangelizante antistite, qui Anglorum linguam perfecte non nouerat, ipse rex suis ducibus ac ministris interpret uerbi existeret caelestis; quia nimirum tam longo exilii sui tempore linguam Scottorum iam plene didicerat. Exin coepere plures per dies de Scottorum regione uenire Britanniam atque illis Anglorum prouinciis, quibus regnauit Osuald, magna deuotione uerbum fidei praedicare et credentibus gratiam baptismi, quicumque sacerdotali erant gradu praediti, ministrare. Construebantur ergo ecclesiae per loca, confluebant ad audiendum uerbum populi gaudentes, donabantur munere regio possessiones et territoria ad instituenda monasteria, inbuebantur praeceptoribus Scottis paruuli Anglorum una cum maioribus studiis et obseruatione disciplinae regularis.

Nam monachi erant maxime, qui ad praedicandum uenerant. Monachus ipse episcopus Aedan, utpote de insula, quae uocatur Hii, destinatus, cuius monasterium in cunctis pene septentrionalium Scottorum, et omnium Pictorum monasteriis non paruo tempore arcem tenebat, regendisque eorum populis praeerat;

quae uidelicet insula ad ius quidem Britanniae pertinet, non magno ab ea freto discreta, sed donatione Pictorum, qui illas Britanniae plagas incolunt, iamdudum monachis Scottorum tradita, eo quod illis praedicantibus fidem Christi perceperint.

[4] Siquidem anno incarnationis dominicae DoLXoVo, quo tempore gubernaculum Romani imperii post Iustinianum Iustinus minor accepit, uenit de Hibernia presbyter et abbas habitu et uita monachi insignis, nomine Columba Britanniam, praedicaturus uerbum Dei prouinciis septentrionalium Pictorum, hoc est eis quae arduis atque horrentibus montium iugis ab

australibus eorum sunt regionibus sequestratae. Namque ipsi australes Picti, qui intra eosdem montes habent sedes, multo ante tempore, ut perhibent, relicto errore idolatriae, fidem ueritatis acceperant, praedicante eis uerbum Nynia episcopo reuerentissimo et sanctissimo uiro de natione Brettonum, qui erat Romae regulariter fidem et mysteria ueritatis edoctus;

cuius sedem episcopatus, sancti Martini episcopi nomine et ecclesia insignem, ubi ipse etiam corpore una cum pluribus sanctis requiescit, iam nunc Anglorum gens obtinet. Qui locus, ad prouinciam Berniciorum pertinens, uulgo uocatur Ad Candidam Casam, eo quod ibi ecclesiam de lapide, insolito Brettonibus more fecerit.

Uenit autem Britanniam Columba, regnante Pictis Bridio filio Meilochon, rege potentissimo, nono anno regni eius, gentemque illam uerbo et exemplo ad fidem Christi conuertit; unde et praefatam insulam ab eis in possessionem monasterii faciendi accepit. Neque enim magna est, sed quasi familiarum quinque, iuxta aestimationem Anglorum; quam successores eius usque hodie tenent, ubi et ipse sepultus est, cum esset annorum LXXVII, post annos circiter XXX et duos, ex quo ipse Britanniam praedicaturus adiit. Fecerat autem, priusquam Britanniam ueniret, monasterium nobile in Hibernia, quod a copia roborum Dearmach lingua Scottorum, hoc est campus roborum, cognominatur. Ex quo utroque monasterio plurima exinde monasteria per discipulos eius et in Brittania et in Hibernia propagata sunt, in quibus omnibus idem monasterium insulanum, in quo ipse requiescit corpore, principatum teneret.

Habere autem solet ipsa insula rectorem semper abbatem presbyterum, cuius iuri et omnis prouincia, et ipsi etiam episcopi ordine inusitato debeant esse subiecti, iuxta exemplum primi doctoris illius, qui non episcopus, sed presbyter extitit et monachus; de cuius uita et uerbis nonnulla a discipulis eius feruntur scripta haberi. Uerum qualiscumque fuerit ipse, nos hoc de illo certum tenemus, quia reliquit successores magna continentia ac diuino amore regularique institutione insignes; in tempore quidem summae festiuitatis dubios circulos sequentes, utpote quibus longe ultra orbem positus nemo synodalia paschalis obseruantiae decreta porrexerat; tantum ea, quae in propheticis, euangelicis, et apostolicis litteris discere poterant, pietatis et castitatis opera diligenter obseruantes. Permansit autem huiusmodi obseruantia paschalis apud eos tempore non pauco, hoc est usque ad annum dominicae incarnationis DCCXV per annos CL.

At tunc ueniente ad eos reuerentissimo et sanctissimo patre et sacerdote Ecgbercto, de natione Anglorum, qui in Hibernia diutius exulauerat pro Christo, eratque et doctissimus in scripturis, et longaeua uitae perfectione eximius, correcti sunt per eum, et ad uerum canonicumque paschae diem translati; quem tamen et antea non semper in luna XIIIa cum Iudaeis, ut quidam rebantur, sed in die quidem dominica, alia tamen, quam decebat, ebdomada celebrabant.

Sciebant enim, ut Christiani, resurrectionem dominicam, quae prima

sabbati facta est, prima sabbati semper esse celebrandam; sed ut barbari et rustici, quando eadem prima sabbati, quae nunc dominica dies cognominatur, ueniret, minime didicerant. Uerum quia gratia caritatis feruere non omiserunt, et huius quoque rei notitiam ad perfectum percipere meruerunt, iuxta promissum apostoli dicentis: 'Et siquid aliter sapitis, et hoc quoque uobis Deus reuelabit.' De quo plenius in sequentibus suo loco dicendum est.

[5] Ab hac ergo insula, ab horum collegio monachorum, ad prouinciam Anglorum instituendam in Christo, missus est Aedan, accepto gradu episcopatus. Quo tempore eidem monasterio Segeni abbas et presbyter praefuit. Unde inter alia uiuendi documenta saluberrimum abstinentiae uel continentiae clericis exemplum reliquit; cuius doctrinam id maxime commendabat omnibus, quod non aliter, quam uiuebat cum suis, ipse docebat. Nil enim huius mundi quaerere, nil amare curabat. Cuncta, quae sibi a regibus uel diuitibus saeculi donabantur, mox pauperibus, qui occurrerent, erogare gaudebat.

Discurrere per cuncta et urbana et rustica loca, non equorum dorso, sed pedum incessu uectus, nisi si maior forte necessitas compulisset, solebat; quatinus ubicumque aliquos uel diuites uel pauperes incedens aspexisset, confestim ad hos diuertens, uel ad fidei suscipiendae sacramentum, si infideles essent, inuitaret; uel si fideles, in ipsa eos fide confortaret, atque ad elemosynas operumque bonorum executionem, et uerbis excitaret et factis.

In tantum autem uita illius a nostri temporis segnitia distabat, ut omnes, qui cum eo incedebant, siue adtonsi, seu laici, meditari deberent, id est, aut legendis scripturis, aut psalmis discendis operam dare. Hoc erat cotidianum opus illius et omnium, qui cum eo erant, ubicumque locorum deuenissent. Et si forte euenisset, quod tamen raro euenit, ut ad regis conuiuium uocaretur, intrabat cum uno clerico aut duobus; et, ubi paululum reficiebatur, adcelerauit ocus ad legendum cum suis, siue ad orandum egredi. Cuius exemplis informati tempore illo religiosi quique uiri ac feminae consuetudinem fecerunt per totum annum, excepta remissione quinquagesimae paschalis, IIIa et VIa sabbati ieiunium ad nonam usque horam protelare. Numquam diuitibus honoris siue timoris gratia, siqua delinquissent, reticebat; sed aspera illos inuentione corripiebat. Nullam potentibus saeculi pecuniam, excepta solum esca, siquos hospitio suscepisset, umquam dare solebat, sed ea potius, quae sibi a diuitibus donaria pecuniarum largiebantur, uel in usus pauperum, ut diximus, dispergebat, uel ad redemptionem eorum, qui iniuste fuerant uenditi, dispensabat. Denique multos, quos pretio dato redemerat, redemptos postmodum suos discipulos fecit, atque ad sacerdotalem usque gradum erudiendo atque instituendo prouexit.

Ferunt autem, quia, cum de prouincia Scottorum rex Osuald postulasset antistitem, qui sibi suaeque genti uerbum fidei ministraret, missus fuerit primo alius austerioris animi uir, qui, cum aliquandiu genti Anglorum praedicans nihil proficeret, nec libenter a populo audiretur, redierit patriam, atque in conuentu seniorum rettulerit, quia nil prodesse docendo genti, ad quam missus

erat, potuisset, eo quod essent homines indomabiles, et durae ac barbarae mentis. At illi, ut perhibent, tractatum magnum in concilio, quid esset agendum, habere coeperunt; desiderantes quidem genti, quam petebantur, saluti esse, sed de non recepto, quem miserant, praedicatorum dolentes. Tum ait Aedan, nam et ipse concilio intererat, ad eum, de quo agebatur, sacerdotem: ‘Uidetur mihi, frater, quia durior iusto indoctis auditoribus fuisti, et non eis iuxta apostolicam disciplinam primo lac doctrinae mollioris porrexisti, donec paulatim enutriti uerbo Dei, ad capienda perfectiora, et ad facienda sublimiora Dei praecepta sufficerent.’

Quo audito omnium, qui considebant, ad ipsum ora et oculi conuersi, diligenter, quid diceret, discutebant, et ipsum esse dignum episcopatu, ipsum ad erudiendos incredulos et indoctos mitti debere decernunt, qui gratia discretionis, quae uirtutum mater est, ante omnia probabatur inbutus; sicque illum ordinantes ad praedicandum miserunt. Qui ubi tempus accepit, sicut prius moderamine discretionis, ita postmodum et ceteris uirtutibus ornatus apparuit.

[6] Huius igitur antistitis doctrina rex Osuald cum ea, cui praeerat, gente Anglorum institutus, non solum incognita progenitoribus suis regna caelorum sperare didicit; sed et regna terrarum plus quam ulli maiorum suorum, ab eodem uno Deo, qui fecit caelum et terram, consecutus est. Denique omnes nationes et prouincias Britanniae, quae in IIII linguas, id est Brettonum, Pictorum, Scottorum, et Anglorum, diuisae sunt, in ditione accepit.

Quo regni culmine sublimatus, nihilominus, quod mirum dictu est, pauperibus et peregrinis semper humilis, benignus, et largus fuit.

Denique fertur, quia tempore quodam, cum die sancto paschae cum praefato episcopo consedisset ad prandium, positusque esset in mensa coram eo discus argenteus regalibus epulis refertus, et iamiamque essent manus ad panem benedicendum missuri, intrasse subito ministrum ipsius, cui suscipiendorum inopum erat cura delegata, et indicasse regi, quia multitudo pauperum undecumque adueniens maxima per plateas sederet, postulans aliquid elimosynae a rege. Qui mox dapes sibimet adpositas deferri pauperibus, sed et discum confringi, atque eisdem minutatim diuidi praecepit. Quo uiso pontifex, qui adsidebat, delectatus tali facto pietatis, adprehendit dexteram eius, et ait: ‘Numquam inueterescat haec manus.’ Quod et ita iuxta uotum benedictionis eius prouenit. Nam cum interfecto illo in pugna, manus cum brachio a cetero essent corpore resectae, contigit, ut hactenus incorruptae perdurent. Denique in urbe regia, quae a regina quondam uocabulo Bebbia cognominatur, loculo inclusae argenteo in ecclesia sancti Petri seruantur, ac digno a cunctis honore uenerantur.

Huius industria regis Derorum et Berniciorum prouinciae, quae eatenus ab inuicem discordabant, in unam sunt pacem, et uelut unum conpaginatae in populum. Erat autem nepos Aeduini regis ex sorore Acha, dignumque fuit, ut tantus praecessor talem haberet de sua consanguinitate et religionis heredem et regni.

[7] Eo tempore gens Occidentalium Saxonum, qui antiquitus Geuissae uocabantur, regnante Cynigilso fidem Christi suscepit, praedicante illis uerbum Birino episcopo, quicum consilio papae Honorii uenerat Britanniam, promittens quidem se illo praesente in intimis ultra Anglorum partibus, quo nullus doctor praecessisset, sanctae fidei semina esse sparsurum. Unde et iussu eiusdem pontificis per Asterium Genuensem episcopum in episcopatus consecratus est gradum. Sed Britanniam perueniens, ac primum Geuissorum gentem ingrediens, cum omnes ibidem paganissimos inueniret, utilius esse ratus est ibi potius uerbum praedicare, quam ultra progrediens eos, quibus praedicare deberet, inquirere.

Itaque euangelizante illo in praefata prouincia, cum rex ipse cathecizatus, fonte baptismi cum sua gente ablueretur, contigit tunc temporis sanctissimum ac uictoriosissimum regem Nordanhymbrorum Osualdum adfuisse, eumque de lauacro exeuntem suscepisse, ac pulcherrimo prorsus et Deo digno consortio, cuius erat filiam accepturus in coniugem, ipsum prius secunda generatione Deo dedicatum sibi accepit in filium. Donauerunt autem ambo reges eidem episcopo ciuitatem, quae uocatur Dorcic, ad faciendum inibi sedem episcopalem; ubi factis dedicatisque ecclesiis, multisque ad Dominum pio eius labore populis aduocatis, migravit ad Dominum, sepultusque est in eadem ciuitate, et post annos multos, Haedde episcopatum agente, translatus inde in Uentam ciuitatem, atque in ecclesia beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli positus est.

Defuncto autem et rege, successit in regnum filius eius Coinualch, qui et fidem ac sacramenta regni caelestis suscipere rennuit, et non multo post etiam regni terrestres potentiam perdidit. Repudiata enim sorore Pendan regis Merciorum, quam duxerat, aliam accepit uxorem;

ideoque bello petitus, ac regno priuatus ab illo, secessit ad regem Orientalium Anglorum, cui nomen erat Anna; apud quem triennio exulans fidem cognouit ac suscepit ueritatis. Nam et ipse, apud quem exulabat, rex erat uir bonus, et bona ac sancta sobole felix, ut in sequentibus docebimus.

Cum uero restitutus esset in regnum Coinualch, uenit in prouinciam de Hibernia pontifex quidam nomine Agilberctus, natione quidem Gallus, sed tunc legendarum gratia scripturarum in Hibernia non paruo tempore demoratus, coniunxitque se regi, sponte ministerium praedicandi assumens. Cuius eruditionem atque industriam uidens rex, rogauit eum, accepta ibi sede episcopali, suae gentis manere pontificem; qui precibus eius adnuens, multis annis eidem genti sacerdotali iure praefuit. Tandem rex, qui Saxonum tantum linguam nouerat, pertaesus barbarae loquellae, subintrodixit in prouinciam alium suae linguae episcopum, uocabulo Uini, et ipsum in Gallia ordinatum; diuidensque in duas parrochias prouinciam, huic in ciuitate Uenta, quae a gente Saxonum Uintanc^{stir} appellatur, sedem episcopatus tribuit; unde offensus grauiter Agilberctus, quod haec ipso inconsulto ageret rex, rediit Galliam, et accepto episcopatu Parisiacaе ciuitatis, ibidem senex ac plenus dierum obiit. Non multis autem annis post abscessum eius a Britania

transactis, pulsus est et Uini ab eodem rege de episcopatu; qui secedens ad regem Merciorum uocabulo Uulfheri, emit pretio ab eo sedem Lundoniae ciuitatis, eiusque episcopus usque ad uitae suae terminum mansit.

Sicque prouincia Occidentalium Saxonum tempore non paucio absque praesule fuit.

Quo etiam tempore rex praefatus ipsius gentis, grauissimis regni sui damnis saepissime ab hostibus adflictus, tandem ad memoriam reduxit, quod eum pridem perfidia regno pulerit, fides agnita Christi in regnum reuocauerit; intellexitque, quod etiam tunc destituta pontifice prouincia recte pariter diuino fuerit destituta praesidio.

Misit ergo legatarios in Galliam ad Agilberctum, summissa illum satisfactione deprecans ad episcopatum suae gentis redire. At ille se excusans, et uenire non posse contestans, quia episcopatu propriae ciuitatis ac parrochiae teneretur adstrictus, ne tamen obnixae petenti nil ferret auxilii, misit pro se illo presbyterum Leutherium nepotem suum, qui ei, si uellet, ordinaretur episcopus;

icens, quod ipse eum dignum esse episcopatu iudicaret. Quo honorifice a populo et a rege suscepto, rogauerunt Theodorum, tunc archiepiscopum Doruuernensis ecclesiae, ipsum sibi antistitem consecrari; qui consecratus in ipsa ciuitate, multis annis episcopatum Geuissorum ex synodica sanctione solus sedulo moderamine gessit.

[8] Anno dominicae incarnationis DCXL, Eadbald rex Cantuariorum transiens ex hac uita, Earconbercto filio regni gubernacula reliquit; quae ille suscepta XXIII annis et aliquot mensibus nobilissime tenuit. Hic primus regum Anglorum in toto regno suo idola relinqui ac destrui, simul et ieiunium XL dierum obseruari principali auctoritate praecepit. Quae ne facile a quopiam posset contemni, in transgressores dignas et competentes punitiones proposuit. Cuius filia Earcongotā, ut condigna parenti suboles, magnarum fuit uirgo uirtutum, seruiens Domino in monasterio, quod in regione Francorum constructum est ab abbatisa nobilissima uocabulo Fara, in loco, qui dicitur in Brige. Nam eo tempore necdum multis in regione Anglorum monasteriis constructis, multi de Britannia monachicae conuersationis gratia Francorum uel Galliarum monasteria adire solebant; sed et filias suas eisdem erudiendas, ac sponso caelesti copulandas mittebant; maxime in Brige, et in Cale, et in Andilegum monasterio; inter quas erat Saethryd, filia uxoris Annae regis Orientalium Anglorum, cuius supra meminimus, et filia naturalis eiusdem regis Aedilberg; quae utraque cum esset peregrina, prae merito uirtutum eiusdem monasterii Brigensis est abbatisa constituta. Cuius regis filia maior Sexburg, uxor Earconbercti regis Cantuariorum, habuit filiam Earcongotam, de qua sumus dicturi.

Huius autem uirginis Deo dicatae multa quidem ab incolis loci illius solent opera uirtutum et signa miraculorum usque hodie narrari.

Uerum nos de transitu tantum illius, quo caelestia regna petiit, aliquid breuiter dicere sufficiat.

Inminente ergo die suae uocationis, coepit circuire in monasterio casulas infirmarum Christi famularum, earumque uel maxime, quae uel aetate prouectae, uel probitate erant morum insigniores. Quarum se omnium precibus humiliter commendans, obitum proxime suum, quem reuelatione didicerat, non celauit esse futurum. Quam uidelicet reuelationem huiusmodi esse perhibebat: uidisse se albatorum cateruam hominum idem monasterium intrare; hosque a se interrogatos, quid quaererent, aut quid ibi uellent, respondisse, quod ob hoc illo fuerint destinati, ut aureum illud nomisma, quod eo de Cantia uenerat, secum adsumerent. Ipsa autem nocte, in cuius ultima parte, id est incipiente aurora, praesentis mundi tenebras transiens supernam migravit ad lucem, multi de fratribus eiusdem monasterii, qui aliis erant in aedibus, iam manifeste se concentus angelorum psallentium audisse referebant, sed et sonitum quasi plurimae multitudinis monasterium ingredientis; unde mox egressi dignoscere quid esset, uiderunt lucem caelitus emissam fuisse permaximam, quae sanctam illam animam carnis uinculis absolutam ad aeterna patriae caelestis gaudia ducebat. Addunt et alia, quae ipsa nocte in monasterio eodem diuinitus fuerint ostensa miracula; sed haec nos ad alia tendentes, suis narrare permittimus. Sepultum est autem corpus uenerabile uirginis et sponsae Christi in ecclesia beati protomartyris Stephani; placuitque post diem tertium, ut lapis, quo monumentum tegebatur, amoueretur, et altius ipso in loco reponeretur; quod dum fieret, tantae flagrantia suauitatis ab imis ebulliuit, ut cunctis, qui adstabant, fratribus ac sororibus, quasi opobalsami cellaria esse uiderentur aperta.

Sed et matertera eius, de qua diximus, Aedilberg, et ipsa Deo dilectam perpetuae uirginitatis gloriam in magna corporis continentia seruauit; quae cuius esset uirtutis, magis post mortem claruit. Cum enim esset abbatissa, coepit facere in monasterio suo ecclesiam in honorem omnium apostolorum, in qua suum corpus sepelliri cupiebat. Sed cum opus idem ad medium ferme esset perductum, illa ne hoc perficeret, morte praerepta est, et in ipso ecclesiae loco, ubi desiderabat, condita. Post cuius mortem, fratribus alia magis curantibus, intermissum est hoc aedificium annis VII, quibus completis statuerunt ob nimietatem laboris, huius structuram ecclesiae funditus relinquere, ossa uero abbatissae illo de loco eleuata, in aliam ecclesiam, quae esset perfecta ac dedicata, transferre. Et aperientes sepulchrum eius, ita intemeratum corpus inuenere, ut a corruptione concupiscentiae carnalis erat immune; et ita denuo lotum, atque aliis uestibus indutum transtulerunt illud in ecclesiam beati Stephani martyris. Cuius uidelicet natalis ibi solet in magna gloria celebrari die Nonarum Iuliarum.

[9] Regnauit autem Osuald christianissimus rex Nordanhymbrorum VIII annos, adnumerato etiam illo, quem et feralis impietas regis Brettonum, et apostasia demens regum Anglorum detestabilem fecerat.

Siquidem, ut supra docuimus, unanimo omnium consensu firmatum est, ut nomen et memoria apostatarum de catalogo regum Christianorum prorsus aboleri deberet, neque aliquis regno eorum annus adnotari.

Quo completo annorum curriculo occisus est, commisso graui proelio, ab eadem pagana gente paganoque rege Merciorum, a quo et prodecessor eius Aeduini peremptus fuerat, in loco, qui lingua Anglorum nuncupatur Maserfelth, anno aetatis suae XXXVIII., die quinto mensis Augusti.

Cuius quanta fides in Deum, quae deuotio mentis fuerit, etiam post mortem uirtutum miraculis claruit. Namque in loco, ubi pro patria dimicans a paganis interfectus est, usque hodie sanitates infirmorum et hominum et pecorum celebrari non desinunt. Unde contigit, ut puluerem ipsum, ubi corpus eius in terram conruit, multi auferentes et in aquam mittentes suis per haec infirmis multum commodi adferrent. Qui uidelicet mos adeo increbruit, ut paulatim ablata exinde terra fossam ad mensuram staturae uirilis altam reddiderit.

Nec mirandum in loco mortis illius infirmos sanari, qui semper, dum uiueret, infirmis et pauperibus consulere, elemosynas dare, opem ferre non cessabat. Et multa quidem in loco illo uel de puluere loci illius facta uirtutum miracula narrantur; sed nos duo tantum, quae a maioribus audiuius, referre satis duximus.

Non multo post interfectionem eius exacto tempore, contigit, ut quidam equo sedens iter iuxta locum ageret illum; cuius equus subito lassescere, consistere, caput in terram declinare, spumas ex ore demittere, et, augescente dolore nimio, in terram coepit ruere.

Desiluit eques, et stramine subtracto coepit expectare horam, qua aut melioratum reciperet iumentum, aut relinqueret mortuum. At ipsum diu graui dolore uexatum, cum diuersas in partes se torqueret, repente uolutando deuenit in illud loci, ubi rex memorabilis occubuit. Nec mora, quiescente dolore cessabat ab insanis membrorum motibus, et consueto equorum more, quasi post lassitudinem in diuersum latus uicissim sese uoluere, statimque exsurgens quasi sanum per omnia, uirecta herbarum audius carpere coepit.

Quo ille uiso, ut uir sagacis ingenii, intellexit aliquid mirae sanctitatis huic loco, quo equus est curatus, inesse; et posito ibi signo, non multo post ascendit equum, atque ad hospitium, quo proposuerat, accessit; quo dum adueniret, inuenit puellam ibi neptem patris familias longo paralysis morbo grauata; et cum familiares domus illius de acerba puellae infirmitate ipso praesente quererentur, coepit dicere ille de loco, ubi caballus suus esset curatus. Quid multa? inponentes eam carro, duxerunt ad locum, ibidemque deposuerunt. At illa posita in loco obdormiuit parumper;

et ubi euigilauit, sanata se ab illa corporis dissolutione sentiens, postulata aqua, ipsa lauit faciem, crines conposuit, caput linteo cooperuit, et cum his, qui se adduxerant, sana pedibus incedendo reuersa est.

[10] Eodem tempore uenit alius quidam de natione Brettonum, ut ferunt, iter faciens iuxta ipsum locum, in quo praefata erat pugna completa; et uidit unius loci spatium cetero campo uiridius ac uenustius; coepitque sagaci animo conicere, quod nulla esset alia causa insolitae illo in loco uiriditatis, nisi quia ibidem sanctorum cetero exercitu uir aliquis fuisset interfectus. Tulit itaque de puluere terrae illius secum inligans in linteo, cogitans, quod futurum erat, quia

ad medellam infirmantium idem puluis proficeret;

et pergens itinere suo peruenit ad uicum quendam uespere, intrauitque in domum, in qua uicani caenantes epulabantur; et susceptus a dominis domus, resedit et ipse cum eis ad conuiuium, adpendens linteolum cum puluere, quem adtulerat, in una posta parietis. Cumque diutius epulis atque ebrietati uacarent, accenso grandi igne in medio, contigit uolantibus in altum scintillis culmen domus, quod erat uirgis contextum, ac foeno tectum, subitaneis flammis impleri. Quod cum repente conuiuiae terrore confusi conspicerent, fugerunt foras nil ardenti domui et iamiamque periturae prodesse ualentes. Consumpta ergo domu flammis, posta solummodo, in qua puluis ille inclusus pendebat, tuta ab ignibus et intacta remansit. Qua uisa uirtute mirati sunt ualde; et perquirentes subtilius, inuenerunt, quia de illo loco adsumptus erat puluis, ubi regis Osualdi sanguis fuerat effusus. Quibus patefactis ac diffamatis longe lateque miraculis, multi per dies locum frequentare illum, et sanitatum ibi gratiam capere sibi suisque coeperunt.

[11] Inter quae nequaquam silentio praetereundum reor, quid uirtutis ac miraculi caelestis fuerit ostensum, cum ossa eius inuenta, atque ad ecclesiam, in qua nunc seruantur, translata sunt.

Factum est autem hoc per industriam reginae Merciorum Osthrydae, quae erat filia fratris eius, id est Osuii, qui post illum regni apicem tenebat, ut in sequentibus dicemus.

Est monasterium nobile in prouincia Lindissi, nomine Beardaneu, quod eadem regina cum uiro suo Aedilredo multum diligebat, uenerabatur, excolebat, in quo desiderabat honoranda patru sui ossa recondere.

Cumque uenisset carrum, in quo eadem ossa ducebantur, incumbente uespere, in monasterium praefatum, noluerunt ea, qui erant in monasterio, libenter excipere; quia etsi sanctum eum nouerant, tamen, quia de alia prouincia ortus fuerat, et super eos regnum acceperat, ueteranis eum odiis etiam mortuum insequiebantur. Unde factum est, ut ipsa nocte reliquiae adlatae foris permanerent, tentorio tantum maiore supra carrum, in quo inerant, extenso. Sed miraculi caelestis ostensio, quam reuerenter eae suscipiendae a cunctis fidelibus essent, patefecit. Nam tota ea nocte columna lucis a carro illo ad caelum usque porrecta, omnibus pene eiusdem Lindissa prouinciae locis conspicua stabat. Unde mane facto fratres monasterii illius, qui pridie abnuerant, diligenter ipsi petere coeperunt, ut apud se eadem sanctae ac Deo dilectae reliquiae conderentur. Lota igitur ossa intulerunt in thecam, quam in hoc praeparauerant, atque in ecclesia iuxta honorem congruum posuerunt;

et ut regia uiri sancti persona memoriam haberet aeternam, uexillum eius super tumbam auro et purpura conpositum adposuerunt, ipsamque aquam, in qua lauerant ossa, in angulo sacrarii fuderunt. Ex quo tempore factum est, ut ipsa terra, quae lauacrum uenerabile suscepit, ad abigendos ex obsessis corporibus daemones gratiae salutaris haberet effectum.

Denique tempore sequente, cum praefata regina in eodem monasterio moraretur, uenit ad salutandam eam abbatissa quaedam uenerabilis, quae

usque hodie superest, uocabulo Aedilhild, soror uirorum sanctorum Aedilui ni et Alduini, quorum prior episcopus in Lindissi prouincia, secundus erat abbas in monasterio, quod uocatur Peartaneu, a quo non longe et illa monasterium habebat. Cum ergo ueniens illo loqueretur cum regina, atque inter alia, sermone de Osualdo exorto, diceret, quod et ipsa lucem nocte illa supra reliquias eius ad caelum usque altam uidisset, adiecit regina, quia de puluere pauimenti, in quo aqua lauacri illius effusa est, multi iam sanati essent infirmi. At illa petiit sibi portionem pulueris salutiferi dari; et accipiens inligatum panno condidit in capsella, et rediit. Transacto autem tempore aliquanto, cum esset in suo monasterio, uenit illic quidam hospes, qui solebat nocturnis saepius horis repente ab inmundo spiritu grauissime uexari. Qui cum benigne susceptus post caenam in lecto membra posuisset, subito a diabolo arreptus, clamare, dentibus frendere, spumare, et diuersis motibus coepit membra torquere. Cumque a nullo uel teneri uel ligari potuisset, cucurrit minister, et pulsans ad ostium nuntiauit abbatisae. At illa aperiens ianuam monasterii, exiuit ipsa cum una sanctimonialium feminarum ad locum uirorum, et euocans presbyterum, rogauit secum uenire ad patientem. Ubi cum uenientes uiderent multos adfuisse, qui uexatum tenere, et motus eius insanos comprimere conati nequaquam ualebant, dicebat presbyter exorcismos, et quaeque poterat, pro sedando miseri furore agebat. Sed nec ipse, quamuis multum laborans, proficere aliquid ualebat. Cumque nil salutis furenti superesse uideretur, repente uenit in mentem abbatisae puluis ille praefatus; statimque iussit ire ministram, et capsellam, in qua erat, adducere. Et cum illa adferens, quae iussa est, intraret atrium domus, in cuius interioribus daemoniosus torquebatur, conticuit ille subito, et quasi in somnum laxatus deposuit caput, membra in quietem omnia composuit.

‘Conticuere omnes, intentique ora tenebant,’

quem res exitum haberet, solliciti exspectantes. Et post aliquantum horae spatium resedit qui uexabatur, et grauiter suspirans: ‘Modo,’

inquit, ‘sanum sapio, recepi enim sensum animi mei.’ At illi sedulo sciscitabantur, quomodo hoc contigisset. Qui ait: ‘Mox ut uirgo haec cum capsella, quam portabat, adpropinquauit atrio domus huius, discessere omnes, qui me premebant, spiritus maligni, et me relicto nusquam conparuerunt.’ Tunc dedit ei abbatisa portiunculam de puluere illo, et sic data oratione a presbytero, noctein illam quietissimam duxit; neque aliquid ex eo tempore nocturni timoris aut uexationis ab antiquo hoste pertulit.

[12] Sequentem dehinc tempore fuit in eodem monasterio puerulus quidam, longo febrium incommodo grauiter uexatus. Qui cum die quadam sollicitus horam accessionis exspectaret, ingressus ad eum quidam de fratribus: ‘Uis,’ inquit, ‘mi nate, doceam te, quomodo cureris ab huius molestia langoris? Surge, ingredere ecclesiam, et accedens ad sepulchrum Osualdi, ibi reside, et quietus manens adhere tumbae.

Uide, ne exeas inde, nec de loco mouearis, donec hora recessionis febrium transierit. Tunc ipse intrabo, et educam te inde.’ Fecit, ut ille suaserat;

sedentemque ad tumbam sancti infirmitas tangere nequaquam praesumsit; quin in tantum timens aufugit, ut nec secunda die, nec tertia, neque umquam exinde eum auderet contingere. Quod ita esse gestum, qui referebat mihi, frater inde adueniens adiecit, quod eo adhuc tempore, quo mecum loquebatur, superesset in eodem monasterio iam iuuenis ille, in quo tunc puero factum erat hoc miraculum sanitatis. Nec mirandum preces regis illius iam cum Domino regnantis multum ualere apud eum, qui temporalis regni quondam gubernacula tenens, magis pro aeterno regno semper laborare ac deprecari solebat.

Denique ferunt, quia a tempore matutinae laudis saepius ad diem usque in orationibus persteterit, atque ob crebrum morem orandi, siue gratias agendi Domino semper ubicumque sedens, supinas super genua sua manus habere solitus sit. Uulgatum est autem, et in consuetudinem prouerbii uersum, quod etiam inter uerba orationis uitam finierit. Nam cum armis et hostibus circumseptus iamiamque uideret se esse perimendum, orauit pro animabus exercitus sui. Unde dicunt in prouerbio: ‘Deus miserere animabus, dixit Osuald cadens in terram.’

Ossa igitur illius translata et condita sunt in monasterio, quo diximus. Porro caput et manus cum brachiis a corpore praecisas iussit rex, qui occiderat, in stipitibus suspendi. Quo post annum deueniens cum exercitu successor regni eius Osuii abstulit ea, et caput quidem in cymiterio Lindisfarnensis ecclesiae, in regia uero ciuitate manus cum brachiis condidit.

[13] NEC solum inclyti fama uiri Britanniae fines lustrauit uniuersos, sed etiam trans oceanum longe radios salutiferae lucis spargens, Germaniae simul et Hiberniae partes attigit. Denique reuerentissimus antistes Acca solet referre, quia, cum Romam uadens, apud sanctissimum Fresonum gentis archiepiscopum Uilbrordum cum suo antistite Uilfrido moraretur, crebro eum audierit de mirandis, quae ad reliquias eiusdem reuerentissimi regis in illa prouincia gesta fuerint, narrare. Sed et in Hibernia cum presbyter adhuc peregrinam pro aeterna patria duceret uitam, rumore sanctitatis illius in ea quoque insula longe lateque iam percrebuisse ferebat; e quibus unum, quod inter alia rettulit, miraculum praesenti nostrae historiae inserendum credidimus.

‘Tempore,’ inquit, ‘mortalitatis, quae Britanniam Hiberniamque lata strage uastauit, percussus est eiusdem clade pestis inter alios scolasticus quidam de genere Scottorum, doctus quidem uir studio litterarum, sed erga curam perpetuae suae saluationis nihil omnino studii et industriae gerens. Qui cum se morti proximum uideret, timere coepit et pauere, ne mox mortuus ob merita scelerum ad inferni claustra raperetur, clamauitque me, cum essem in uicinia positus, et inter egra tremens suspiria, flebili uoce talia mecum querebatur: “Uides,” inquit, “quia iamiamque crescente corporis molestia ad articulum subeundae mortis conpellor; nec dubito me post mortem corporis statim ad perpetuam animae mortem rapiendum, ac infernalibus subdendum esse tormentis; quia tempore non paucio inter studia diuinae lectionis, uitiorum

potius implicamentis, quam diuinis solebam seruire mandatis. Inest autem animo, si mihi pietas superna aliqua uiuendi spatia donauerit, uitiosos mores corrigere, atque ad imperium diuinae uoluntatis totam ex integro mentem uitamque transferre. Uerum noui non hoc esse meriti mei, ut indutias uiuendi uel accipiam, uel me accepturum esse confidam, nisi forte misero mihi et indigno uenia, per auxilium eorum, qui illi fideliter seruierunt, propitiari dignatus fuerit. Audiuius autem, et fama est creberrima, quia fuerit in gente uestra rex mirandae sanctitatis, uocabulo Osuald, cuius excellentia fidei et uirtutis, etiam post mortem, uirtutum frequentium operatione claruerit; precorque, si aliquid reliquiarum illius penes te habes, adferas mihi, si forte mihi Dominus per eius meritum misereri uoluerit.” At ego respondi: “Habeo quidem de ligno, in quo caput eius occisi a paganis infixum est; et, si firmo corde credideris, potest diuina pietas per tanti meritum uiri et huius uitae spatia longiora concedere, et ingressu te uitae perennis dignum reddere.” Nec moratus ille integram se in hoc habere fidem respondebat.

‘Tum benedixi aquam, et astulam roboris praefati inmittens obtuli egro potandum. Nec mora, melius habere coepit, et conualescens ab infirmitate, multo deinceps tempore uixit; totoque ad Deum corde et opere conuersus, omnibus, ubicumque perueniebat, clementiam pii Conditoris et fidelis eius famuli gloriam praedicabat.’

[14] Translato ergo ad caelestia regna Osualdo, suscepit regni terrestris sedem pro eo frater eius Osuii, iuuenis XXX circiter annorum, et per annos XXVIII laboriosissime tenuit, inpugnatus uidelicet et ab ea, quae fratrem eius occiderat, pagana gente Merciorum, et a filio quoque suo Alchfrido, nec non et a fratrui, id est fratris sui, qui ante eum regnauit, filio Oidilualdo.

Cuius anno secundo, hoc est ab incarnatione dominica anno DCXLIIII, reuerentissimus pater Paulinus, quondam quidem Eburacensis, sed tunc Hrofensis episcopus ciuitatis, transiuit ad Dominum sexto Iduum Octobrium die; qui X et VIII annos, menses duos, dies XXI episcopatum tenuit; sepultusque est in secretario beati apostoli Andreae, quod rex Aedilberct a fundamentis in eadem Hrofi ciuitate construxit. In cuius locum Honorius archiepiscopus ordinauit Ithamar, oriundum quidem de gente Cantuariorum, sed uita et eruditione antecessoribus suis aequandum. Habuit autem Osuii primis regni sui temporibus consortem regiae dignitatis, uocabulo Osuini, de stirpe regis Aeduini, hoc est filium Osrici, de quo supra rettulimus, uirum eximiae pietatis et religionis; qui prouinciae Derorum septem annis in maxima omnium rerum affluentia, et ipse amabilis omnibus praefuit. Sed nec cum eo ille, qui ceteram Transhumbranae gentis partem ab Aquilone, id est Berniciorum prouinciam, regebat, habere pacem potuit; quin potius, ingrauescentibus causis dissensionum, miserrima hunc caede peremit.

Siquidem congregato contra inuicem exercitu, cum uideret se Osuini cum illo, qui plures habebat auxiliares, non posse bello configere, ratus est utilius tunc demissa intentione bellandi, seruare se ad tempora meliora. Remisit ergo exercitum, quem congregauerat, ac singulos domum redire praecepit a loco,

qui uocatur Uilfarasdun, id est mons Uilfari, et est a uico Cataractone X ferme milibus passuum contra solstitialem occasum secretus;

diuertitque ipse cum uno tantum milite sibi fidissimo, nomine Tondheri, celandus in domum comitis Hunualdi, quem etiam ipsum sibi amicissimum autumabat. Sed heu, pro dolor! longe aliter erat; nam ab eodem comite proditum eum Osuiu cum praefato ipsius milite per praefectum suum Ediluinum detestanda omnibus morte interfecit. Quod factum est die XIIIa Kalendarum Septembrium, anno regni eius nono, in loco, qui dicitur Ingetlingum; ubi postmodum, castigandi huius facinoris gratia, monasterium constructum est; in quo pro utriusque regis, et occisi uidelicet, et eius, qui occidere iussit, animae redemptione cotidie Domino preces offerri deberent.

Erat autem rex Osuini et aspectu uenustus, et statura sublimis, et affatu iucundus, et moribus ciuilibus, et manu omnibus, id est nobilibus simul atque ignobilibus, largus; unde contigit, ut ob regiam eius et animi, et uultus, et meritorum dignitatem ab omnibus diligeretur, et undique ad eius ministerium de cunctis prope prouinciis uiri etiam nobilissimi concurrerent. Cuius inter ceteras uirtutis et modestiae, et, ut ita dicam, specialis benedictionis glorias etiam maxima fuisse fertur humilitas, ut uno probare sat erit exemplo.

Donauerat equum optimum antistiti Aidano, in quo ille, quamuis ambulare solitus, uel amnium fluentia transire, uel si alia quaelibet necessitas insisteret, uiam peragere posset. Cui cum paruo interiecto tempore pauper quidam occurreret elimosynam petens, desiliens ille praecepit equum, ita ut erat stratus regaliter, pauperi dari; erat enim multum misericors, et cultor pauperum, ac uelut pater miserorum. Hoc cum regi esset relatum, dicebat episcopo, cum forte ingressuri essent ad prandium: ‘Quid uoluisti, domine antistes, equum regium, quem te conueniebat proprium habere, pauperi dare? Numquid non habuimus equos uiliores plurimos, uel alias species, quae ad pauperum dona sufficerent, quamuis illum eis equum non dares, quem tibi specialiter possidendum elegi?’ Cui statim episcopus: ‘Quid loqueris,’ inquit, ‘rex? Numquid tibi carior est ille filius equae, quam ille filius Dei?’ Quibus dictis intrabant ad prandendum. Et episcopus quidem residebat in suo loco. Porro rex, uenerat enim de uenatu, coepit consistens ad focum calefieri cum ministris; et repente inter calefaciendum recordans uerbum, quod dixerat illi antistes, discinxit se gladio suo, et dedit illum ministro, festinusque accedens ante pedes episcopi conruit, postulans, ut sibi placatus esset, ‘quia numquam,’ inquit, ‘deinceps aliquid loquar de hoc aut iudicabo, quid uel quantum de pecunia nostra filiis Dei tribuas.’ Quod uidens episcopus, multum pertimuit, ac statim exurgens leuauit eum, promittens se multum illi esse placatum, dum modo ille residens ad epulas tristitiam deponeret.

Dumque rex, iubente ac postulante episcopo, laetitiam reciperet, coepit e contra episcopus tristis usque ad lacrimarum profusionem effici. Quem dum presbyter suus lingua patria, quam rex et domestici eius non nouerant, quare lacrimaretur, interrogasset: ‘Scio,’

inquit, ‘quia non multo tempore uicturus est rex; numquam enim ante haec

uidi humilem regem. Unde animaduerto illum citius ex hac uita rapiendum; non enim digna est haec gens talem habere rectorem.’ Nec multo post dira antistitis praesagia tristi regis funere, de quo supra diximus, impleta sunt.

Sed et ipse antistes Aidan non plus quam XIIo post occisionem regis, quem amabat, die, id est pridie Kalendas Septembres, de saeculo ablatus, perpetua laborum suorum a Domino praemia recepit.

[15] Qui cuius meriti fuerit, etiam miraculorum signis internus arbiter edocuit, e quibus tria memoriae causa ponere satis sit.

Presbyter quidam, nomine Utta, multae grauitatis ac ueritatis uir, et ob id omnibus, etiam ipsis principibus saeculi honorabilis, cum mitteretur Cantiam ob adducendam inde coniugem regi Osuio, filiam uidelicet Aduini regis Eanfledam, quae occiso patre illuc fuerat adducta; qui terrestri quidem itinere illo uenire, sed nauigio cum uirgine redire disponebat, accessit ad episcopum Aidanum, obsecrans eum pro se suisque, qui tantum iter erant adgressuri, Domino supplicare. Qui benedicens illos ac Domino commendans, dedit etiam oleum sanctificatum: ‘Scio,’ inquit, ‘quia, ubi nauem ascenderitis, tempestas uobis, et uentus contrarius superueniet; sed tu memento, ut hoc oleum, quod tibi do, mittas in mare; et statim quiescentibus uentis, serenitas maris uos laeta prosequetur, ac cupito itinere domum remittet.’ Quae cuncta, ut praedixerat antistes, ex ordine completa sunt; et quidem inprimis furentibus undis pelagi, temtabant nautae anchoris in mare missis nauem retinere, neque hoc agentes aliquid proficiebant. Cumque uerrentibus undique et implere incipientibus nauem fluctibus, mortem sibi omnes imminere, et iamiamque adesse uiderent, tandem presbyter reminiscens uerba antistitis, adsumta ampulla misit de oleo in pontum, et statim, ut praedictum erat, suo quieuit a feruore. Sicque factum est, ut uir Dei et per prophetiae spiritum tempestatem praedixerit futuram, et per uirtutem eiusdem spiritus hanc exortam, quamuis corporaliter absens, sopiuerit. Cuius ordinem miraculi non quilibet dubius relator, sed fidelissimus mihi nostrae ecclesiae presbyter, Cynimund uocabulo, narrauit, qui se hoc ab ipso Utta presbytero, in quo et per quem completum est, audisse perhibebat.

[16] Aluid eiusdem patris memorabile miraculum ferunt multi, qui nosse potuerunt. Nam tempore episcopatus eius, hostilis Merciorum exercitus Penda duce Nordanhybrorum regiones impia clade longe lateque deuastans peruenit ad urbem usque regiam, quae ex Bebbae quondam reginae uocabulo cognominatur, eamque, quia neque armis neque obsidione capere poterat, flammis absumere conatus est;

discissisque uiculis, quos in uicinia urbis inuenit, aduexit illo plurimam congeriem trabium, tignorum, parietum, uirgeorum, et tecti fenei, et his urbem in magna altitudine circumdedit a parte, quae terrae est contigua, et dum uentum opportunum cerneret, inlato igne conburere urbem nisus est. Quo tempore reuerentissimus antistes Aidan in insula Farne, quae duobus ferme milibus passuum ab urbe procul abest, morabatur. Illo enim saepius secretae orationis et silentii causa secedere consuebat; denique usque hodie locum sedis

illius solitariae in eadem insula solent ostendere. Qui cum uentis ferentibus globos ignis ac fumum supra muros urbis exaltari conspiceret, fertur eleuatis ad caelum oculis manibusque cum lacrimis dixisse: ‘Uide, Domine, quanta mala facit Penda.’ Quo dicto statim mutati ab urbe uenti in eos, qui accenderant, flammaram incendia retorserunt, ita ut aliquot laesi, omnes terrii, inpugnare ultra urbem cessarent, quam diuinitus iuuari cognouerant.

[17] Hunc cum dies mortis egredi e corpore cogeret, completis annis episcopatus sui XVII erat in uilla regia non longe ab urbe, de qua praefati sumus. In hac enim habens ecclesiam et cubiculum, saepius ibidem diuertere ac manere, atque inde ad praedicandum circumquaque exire consueuerat; quod ipsum et in aliis uillis regiis facere solebat, utpote nil propriae possessionis, excepta ecclesia sua et adiacentibus agellis habens. Tetenderunt ergo ei egrotanti tentorium ad occidentalem ecclesiae partem, ita ut ipsum tentorium parieti hereret ecclesiae. Unde factum est, ut adclinis destinae, quae extrinsecus ecclesiae pro munimine erat adposita, spiritum uitae exhalaret ultimum. Obiit autem septimo decimo episcopatus sui anno, pridie Kalendarum Septembrium. Cuius corpus mox inde translatum ad insulam Lindisfarnensium, atque in cimiterio fratrum sepultum est. At interiecto tempore aliquanto, cum fabricata esset ibi basilica maior, atque in honorem beatissimi apostolorum principis dedicata, illo ossa eius translata, atque ad dexteram altaris iuxta uenerationem tanto pontifice dignam condita sunt.

Successit uero ei in episcopatum Finan, et ipse illo ab Hii Scottorum insula ac monasterio destinatus, ac tempore non pauco in episcopatu permansit. Contigit autem post aliquot annos, ut Penda Merciorum rex cum hostili exercitu haec in loca perueniens, cum cuncta, quae poterat, ferro flammaque perderet, uicus quoque ille, in quo antistes obiit, una cum ecclesia memorata flammis absumeretur. Sed mirum in modum sola illa destina, cui incumbens obiit, ab ignibus circum cuncta uorantibus absumi non potuit. Quo clarescente miraculo, mox ibidem ecclesia restaurata, et haec eadem destina in munimentum est parietis, ut ante fuerat, forinsecus adposita. Rursumque peracto tempore aliquanto, euenit per culpam incuriae uicum eundem et ipsam pariter ecclesiam ignibus consumi.

Sed ne tunc quidem eandem tangere flamma destinam ualebat; et cum magno utique miraculo ipsa eius foramina ingrediens, quibus aedificio erat adfixa, perederet, ipsam tamen ledere nullatenus sinebatur. Unde tertio aedificata ibi ecclesia, destinam illam non, ut antea, deforis in fulcimentum domus adposuerunt, sed intro ipsam ecclesiam in memoriam miraculi posuerunt, ubi intrantes genu flectere, ac misericordiae caelesti supplicare deberent. Constatque multos ex eo tempore gratiam sanitatis in eodem loco consecutos;

quin etiam astulis ex ipsa destina excisis, et in aquam missis, plures sibi suisque langorum remedia conquisiere.

Scripsi autem haec de persona et operibus uiri praefati; nequaquam in eo laudans aut eligens hoc, quod de obseruatione paschae minus perfecte

sapiebat; immo hoc multum detestans, sicut in libro, quem de temporibus composui, manifestissime probaui; sed quasi uerax historicus, simpliciter ea, quae de illo siue per illum sunt gesta, describens, et quae laude sunt digna in eius actibus laudans, atque ad utilitatem legentium memoriae commendans; studium uidelicet pacis et caritatis, continentiae et humilitatis; animum irae et auaritiae uictorem, superbiae simul et uanae gloriae contemptorem; industriam faciendi simul et docendi mandata caelestia, solertiam lectionis et uigiliarum, auctoritatem sacerdote dignam, redarguendi superbos ac potentes, pariter et infirmos consolandi, ac pauperes recreandi uel defendendi clementiam. Qui, ut breuiter multa comprehendam, quantum ab eis, qui illum nouere, didicimus, nil ex omnibus, quae in euangelicis uel apostolicis siue propheticis litteris facienda cognouerat, praetermittere, sed cuncta pro suis uiribus operibus explere curabat. Haec in praefato antistite multum conplector et amo, quia nimirum haec Deo placuisse non ambigo. Quod autem pascha non suo tempore obseruabat, uel canonicum eius tempus ignorans, uel suae gentis auctoritate ne agnitum sequeretur deuictus, non adprobo nec laudo. In quo tamen hoc adprobo, quia in celebratione sui paschae non aliud corde tenebat, uenerabatur, et praedicabat, quam quod nos; id est, redemptionem generis humani per passionem, resurrectionem, ascensionem in caelos mediatoris Dei et hominum hominis Iesu Christi. Unde et hanc non, ut quidam falso opinantur, XIIIa luna in qualibet feria cum Iudaeis, sed die dominica semper agebat, a luna XIIIa usque ad XXam; propter fidem uidelicet dominicae resurrectionis, quam una sabbati factam, propterque spem nostrae resurrectionis, quam eadem una sabbati, quae nunc dominica dies dicitur, ueraciter futuram cum sancta ecclesia credebat.

[18] His temporibus regno Orientalium Anglorum, post Erpualdum Redualdi successorem, Sigberct frater eius praefuit, homo bonus ac religiosus; qui dudum in Gallia, dum inimicitias Redualdi fugiens exularet, lauacrum baptismi percepit, et patriam reuersus, ubi regno potitus est, mox ea, quae in Galliis bene disposita uidit, imitari cupiens, instituit scolam, in qua pueri litteris erudirentur;

iuuante se episcopo Felice, quem de Cantia acceperat, eisque pedagogos ac magistros iuxta morem Cantuariorum praebente.

Tantumque rex ille caelestis regni amator factus est, ut ad ultimum, relictis regni negotiis, et cognato suo Ecgrice commendatis, qui et antea partem eiusdem regni tenebat, intraret monasterium, quod sibi fecerat, atque accepta tonsura pro aeterno magis regno militare curaret. Quod dum multo tempore faceret, contigit gentem Merciorum duce rege Penda aduersus Orientales Anglos in bellum procedere, qui, dum se inferiores in bello hostibus conspicerent, rogauerunt Sigberctum ad confirmandum militem secum uenire in proelium. Illo nolente ac contradicente, inuitum monasterio eruentes duxerunt in certamen, sperantes minus animos militum trepidare, minus praesente duce quondam strenuissimo et eximio posse fugam meditari. Sed ipse professionis suae non inmemor, dum opimo esset uallatus exercitu,

nonnisi uirgam tantum habere in manu uoluit: occisusque est una cum rege Ecgrice, et cunctus eorum, insistentibus paganis, caesus siue dispersus exercitus.

Successor autem regni eorum factus est Anna filius Eni de regio genere, uir optimus, atque optimae genitor sobolis, de quibus in sequentibus suo tempore dicendum est; qui et ipse postea ab eodem pagano Merciorum duce, a quo et prodecessores eius, occisus est.

[19] Uerum dum adhuc Sigberct regni infulas teneret, superuenit de Hibernia uir sanctus nomine Furseus, uerbo et actibus clarus, sed et egregiis insignis uirtutibus, cupiens pro Domino, ubicumque sibi oportunum inueniret, peregrinam ducere uitam. Qui cum ad prouinciam Orientalium peruenisset Anglorum, susceptus est honorifice a rege praefato, et solitum sibi opus euangelizandi exsequens, multos et exemplo uirtutis, et incitamento sermonis, uel incredulos ad Christum conuertit, uel iam credentes amplius in fide atque amore Christi confirmauit.

Ubi quadam infirmitate corporis arreptus, angelica meruit uisione perfrui, in qua admonitus est coepto uerbi ministerio sedulus insistere, uigiliisque consuetis et orationibus indefessus incumbere; eo quod certus sibi exitus, sed incerta eiusdem exitus esset hora futura, dicente Domino: ‘Uigilate itaque, quia nescitis diem neque horam.’ Qua uisione confirmatus, curauit locum monasterii, quem a praefato rege Sigbercto acceperat, uelocissime construere, ac regularibus instituere disciplinis. Erat autem monasterium siluarum et maris uicinitate amoenum, constructum in castro quodam, quod lingua Anglorum Cnobheresburg, id est urbs Cnobheri, uocatur; quod deinde rex prouinciae illius Anna ac nobiles quique augustioribus aedificiis ac donariis adornarunt.

Erat autem uir iste de nobilissimo genere Scottorum, sed longe animo quam carne nobilior. Ab ipso tempore pueritiae suae curam non modicam lectionibus sacris simul et monasticis exhibebat disciplinis, et, quod maxime sanctos decet, cuncta, quae agenda didicerat, sollicitus agere curabat.

Quid multa? Procedente tempore et ipse sibi monasterium, in quo liberius caelestibus studiis uacaret, construxit; ubi correptus infirmitate, sicut libellus de uita eius conscriptus sufficienter edocet, raptus est e corpore; et a uespera usque ad galli cantum corpore exutus, angelicorum agminum et aspectus intueri, et laudes beatas meruit audire. Referre autem erat solitus, quod aperte eos inter alia resonare audiret: ‘Ibunt sancti de uirtute in uirtutem’;

et iterum: ‘Uidebitur Deus deorum in Sion.’ Qui reductus in corpore, et die tertia rursum eductus, uidit non solum maiora beatorum gaudia, sed et maxima malignorum spirituum certamina, qui crebris accusationibus inprobi iter illi caeleste intercludere contendebant;

nec tamen, protegentibus eum angelis, quicquam proficiebant. De quibus omnibus siqui plenius scire uult (id est, quanta fraudis solertia daemones et actus eius, et uerba superflua, et ipsas etiam cogitationes quasi in libro descriptas replicauerint; quae ab angelis sanctis, quae a uiris iustis sibi inter

angelos apparentibus laeta uel tristia cognouerit), legat ipsum, de quo dixi, libellum uitae eius, et multum ex illo, ut reor, profectus spiritualis accipiet.

In quibus tamen unum est, quod et nos in hac historia ponere multis commodum duximus. Cum ergo in altum esset elatus, iussus est ab angelis, qui eum ducebant, respicere, in mundum. At ille oculos in inferiora deflectens, uidit quasi uallem tenebrosam subtus se in imo positam. Uidit et quattuor ignes in aere non multo ab inuicem spatio distantes. Et interrogans angelos, qui essent hi ignes, audiuit hos esse ignes, qui mundum succedentes essent consumturi. Unum mendacii, cum hoc, quod in baptismo abrenuntiare nos Satanae et omnibus operibus eius promissimus, minime inplemus; alterum cupiditatis, cum mundi diuitias amori caelestium praeponimus;

tertium dissensionis, cum animos proximorum etiam in superuacuis rebus offendere non formidamus; quartum impietatis, cum infirmiores spoliare et eis fraudem facere pro nihilo ducimus. Crescentes uero paulatim ignes usque ad inuicem sese extenderunt, atque in inmensam adunati sunt flammam. Cumque adpropinquassent, pertimescens ille dicit angelo: 'Domine, ecce ignis mihi adpropinquat.' At ille: 'Quod non incendisti,' inquit, 'non ardebit in te; nam etsi terribilis iste ac grandis esse rogos uidetur, tamen iuxta merita operum singulos examinat; quia uniuscuiusque cupiditas in hoc igni ardebit.

Sicut enim quis ardet in corpore per illicitam uoluptatem, ita solutus corpore ardebit per debitam poenam.' Tunc uidit unum de tribus angelis, qui sibi in tota utraque uisione ductores adfuerunt, praecedentem ignes flammae diuidere, et duos ab utroque latere circumuolantes ab ignium se periculo defendere. Uidit autem et daemones per ignem uolantes incendia bellorum contra iustos struere.

Sequuntur aduersus ipsum accusationes malignorum, defensiones spirituum bonorum, copiosior caelestium agminum uisio; sed et uirorum de sua natione sanctorum, quos olim sacerdotii gradu non ignobiliter potitos, fama iam uulgante, conpererat; a quibus non pauca, quae uel ipsi, uel omnibus, qui audire uellent, multum salubria essent, audiuit. Qui cum uerba finissent, et cum angelicis spiritibus ipsi quoque ad caelos redirent, remanserunt cum beato Furseo tres angeli, de quibus diximus, qui eum ad corpus referrent.

Cumque praefato igni maximo adpropiaerent, diuisit quidem angelus, sicut prius, ignem flammae. Sed uir Dei ubi ad patefactam usque inter flammam ianuam peruenit, arripientes inmundi spiritus unum de eis, quos in ignibus torrebant, iactauerunt in eum, et contingentes humerum maxillamque eius incenderunt; cognouitque hominem, et, quia uestimentum eius morientis acceperit, ad memoriam reduxit. Quem angelus sanctus statim adprehendens in ignem reiecit. Dicebatque hostis malignus: 'Nolite repellere, quem ante suscepistis; nam sicut bona eius peccatoris suscepistis, ita et de poenis eius participes esse debetis.' Contradicens angelus: 'Non,' inquit, 'propter auaritiam, sed propter saluandam eius animam suscepit'; cessauitque ignis. Et conuersus ad eum angelus: 'Quod incendisti,' inquit, 'hoc arsit in te. Si enim

huius uiri in peccatis suis mortui pecuniam non acceperisset, nec poena eius in te arderet.' Et plura locutus, quid erga salutem eorum, qui ad mortem poeniterent, esset agendum, salubri sermone docuit. Qui postmodum in corpore restitutus, omni uitae suae tempore signum incendii, quod in anima pertulit, uisibile cunctis in humero maxillaque portauit; mirumque in modum, quid anima in occulto passa sit, caro palam praemonstrabat. Curabat autem semper, sicut et antea facere consuerat, omnibus opus uirtutum et exemplis ostendere, et praedicare sermonibus. Ordinem autem uisionum suarum illis solummodo, qui propter desiderium conpunctionis interrogabant, exponere uolebat. Superest adhuc frater quidam senior monasterii nostri, qui narrare solet dixisse sibi quendam multum ueracem ac religiosum hominem, quod ipsum Furseum uiderit in prouincia Orientalium Anglorum, illasque uisiones ex ipsius ore audierit; adiciens, quia tempus hiemis fuerit acerrimum et glacie constrictum, cum sedens in tenui ueste uir ita inter dicendum, propter magnitudinem memorati timoris uel suauitatis, quasi in mediae aetatis caumate sudauerit.

Cum ergo, ut ad superiora redeamus, multis annis in Scottia uerbum Dei omnibus adnuntians, tumultus inruentium turbarum non facile ferret, relictis omnibus, quae habere uidebatur, ab ipsa quoque insula patria discessit; et paucis cum fratribus per Brettones in prouinciam Anglorum deuenit, ibique praedicans uerbum, ut diximus, monasterium nobile construxit. Quibus rite gestis, cupiens se ab omnibus saeculi huius. et ipsius quoque monasterii negotiis alienare, reliquit monasterii et animarum curam fratri suo Fullano, et presbyteris Gobbano et Dicullo, et ipse ab omnibus mundi rebus liber in anchoretica conuersatione uitam finire disposuit. Habuit alterum fratrem uocabulo Ultanum, qui de monasterii probatione diuturna ad heremiticam peruenerat uitam. Hunc ergo solus petens, annum totum cum eo in continentia et orationibus, in cotidianis manuum uixit laboribus.

Dein turbatam incursione gentilium prouinciam uidens, et monasteriis quoque periculum imminere praeuidens, dimissis ordinate omnibus nauigauit Galliam, ibique a rege Francorum Hloduio uel patricio Ercunualdo honorifice susceptus, monasterium construxit in loco Latineaco nominato, ac non multo post infirmitate correptus diem clausit ultimum. Cuius corpus idem Ercunualdus patricius accipiens, seruauit in porticu quodam ecclesiae, quam in uilla sua, cui nomen est Perrona, faciebat, donec ipsa ecclesia dedicaretur. Quod dum post dies XXVII esset factum, et corpus ipsum de porticu ablatum prope altare esset recondendum, inuentum est ita inlesum, ac si eadem hora de hac luce fuisset egressus. Sed et post annos IIII, constructa domuncula cultiore receptui corporis eiusdem, ad orientem altaris, adhuc sine macula corruptionis inuentum, ibidem digno cum honore translatum est; ubi merita illius multis saepe constat Deo operante claruisse uirtutibus. Haec et de corporis eius incorruptione breuiter attigimus, ut, quanta esset uiri sublimitas, legentibus notius existeret. Quae cuncta in libello eius sufficientius, sed et de aliis conmilitionibus ipsis, quisque legerit, inueniet.

[20] Interea, defuncto Felice Orientalium Anglorum episcopo post X et VII annos accepti episcopatus, Honorius loco eius ordinauit Thomam diaconum eius de prouincia Gyruiorum; et hoc post quinque annos sui episcopatus de hac uita subtracto, Berctgilsum, cognomine Bonifatium, de prouincia Cantuariorum, loco eius substituit. Et ipse quoque Honorius, postquam metas sui cursus inpleuit, ex hac luce migravit anno ab incarnatione Domini DCLIII, pridie Kalendarum Octobrium; et cessante episcopatu per annum et sex menses, electus est archiepiscopus cathedrae Doruuernensis sextus Deusdedit de gente Occidentalium Saxonum; quem ordinaturus uenit illuc Ithamar, antistes ecclesiae Hrofensis. Ordinatus est autem die VIImo Kalendarum Aprilium, et rexit ecclesiam annos VIII, menses III et duos dies; et ipse, defuncto Ithamar, consecrauit pro eo Damianum, qui de genere Australium Saxonum erat oriundus.

[21] HIS temporibus Middilangli, id est Mediterranei Angli, sub principe Peada filio Pendan regis fidem et sacramenta ueritatis perceperunt, Qui cum esset iuuenis optimus, ac regis nomine ac persona dignissimus, praelatus est a patre regno gentis illius;

uenitque ad regem Nordanhymbrorum Osuiu, postulans filiam eius Alchfledam sibi coniugem dari. Neque aliter, quod petebat, inpetrare potuit, nisi fidem Christi ac baptismum cum gente, cui praeerat, acciperet. At ille audita praedicatione ueritatis, et promissione regni caelestis, speque resurrectionis ac futurae immortalitatis, libenter se Christianum fieri uelle confessus est, etiamsi uirginem non acciperet; persuasus maxime ad percipiendam fidem a filio regis Osuiu, nomine Alchfrido, qui erat cognatus et amicus eius, habens sororem ipsius coniugem, uocabulo Cyniburgam, filiam Pendan regis. Baptizatus est ergo a Finano episcopo cum omnibus, qui secum uenerant, comitibus ac militibus, eorumque famulis uniuersis in uico regis inlustri, qui uocatur Ad Murum. Et acceptis IIII presbyteris, qui ad docendam baptizandamque gentem illius et eruditione et uita uidebantur idonei, multo cum gaudio reuersus est. Erant autem presbyteri, Ceddd, et Adda, et Betti, et Diuma, quorum ultimus natione Scottus, ceteri fuere de Anglis. Adda autem erat frater Uttan presbyteri inlustri, et abbatis monasterii, quod uocatur Ad Caprae Caput, cuius supra meminimus. Uenientes ergo in prouinciam memorati sacerdotes cum principe, praedicabant uerbum, et libenter auditi sunt, multique cotidie, et nobilium, et infirmorum, abrenuntiata sorde idolatriae, fidei sunt fonte abluti.

Nec prohibuit Penda rex, quin etiam in sua, hoc est Merciorum, natione uerbum, siqui uellent audire, praedicaretur. Quin potius odio habebat, et dispiciebat eos, quos fide Christi inbutos opera fidei non habere deprehendit, dicens contemnendos esse eos et miseros, qui Deo suo, in quem crederent, oboedire contemnerent.

Coepta sunt haec biennio ante mortem Pendan regis. Ipso autem occiso, cum Osuiu rex Christianus regnum eius acciperet, ut in sequentibus dicemus, factus est Diuma unus ex praefatis IIII sacerdotibus episcopus Mediterraneorum Anglorum simul et Merciorum, ordinatus a Finano

episcopo. Paucitas enim sacerdotum cogebat unum antistitem duobus populis praefici. Qui cum pauco sub tempore non paucam Domino plebem adquisisset, defunctus est apud Mediterraneos Anglos in regione, quae uocatur Infeppingum. Suscepitque pro illo episcopatum Ceollach, et ipse de natione Scottorum, qui non multo post, relicto episcopatu, reuersus est ad insulam Hii, ubi plurimorum caput et arcem Scotti habuere coenobiorum; succedente illi in episcopatum Trumheri, uiro religioso et monachica uita instituto, natione quidem Anglorum, sed a Scottis ordinato episcopo.

Quod temporibus Uulfheri regis, de quo in sequentibus dicemus, factum est.

[22] Eo tempore etiam Orientales Saxones fidem, quam olim, expulso Mellito antistite, abiecerant, instantia regis Osuii receperunt.

Erat enim rex eiusdem gentis Sigberct, qui post Sigberctum cognomento Paruum regnauit, amicus eiusdem Osuii regis, qui, cum frequenter ad eum in prouinciam Nordanhymbrorum ueniret, solebat eum hortari ad intellegendum deos esse non posse, qui hominum manibus facti essent; dei creandi materiam lignum uel lapidem esse non posse, quorum recisurae uel igni absumerentur, uel in uasa quaelibet humani usus formarentur, uel certe dispectui habita foras proicerentur, et pedibus conculcata in terram uerterentur. Deum potius intellegendum maiestate inconprehensibilem, humanis oculis inuisibilem, omnipotentem, aeternum, qui caelum et terram et humanum genus creasset, regeret, et iudicaturus esset orbem in aequitate;

cuius sedes aeterna non in uili et caduco metallo, sed in caelis esset credenda; meritoque intellegendum, quia omnes, qui uoluntatem eius, a quo creati sunt, discerent et facerent, aeterna ab illo praemia essent percepturi. Haec et huiusmodi multa cum rex Osuii regi Sigbercto amicali et quasi fraterno consilio saepe inculcaret, tandem iuuante amicorum consensu credidit, et, facto cum suis consilio, cum exhortatione, fauentibus cunctis et adnuentibus fidei, baptizatus est cum eis a Finano episcopo in uilla regia, cuius supra meminimus, quae cognominatur Ad Murum. Est enim iuxta murum, quo olim Romani Britanniam insulam praecinxere, XII milibus passuum a mari orientali secreta.

Igitur rex Sigberct aeterni regni iam ciuis effectus, temporalis sui regni sedem repetiit, postulans ab Osuii rege, ut aliquos sibi doctores daret, qui gentem suam ad fidem Christi conuerterent, ac fonte salutari abluerent. At ille mittens ad prouinciam Mediterraneorum Anglorum clamauit ad se uirum Dei Cedd, et dato illi socio altero quodam presbytero, misit praedicare uerbum genti Orientalium Saxonum. Ubi cum omnia perambulantes multam Domino ecclesiam congregassent, contigit tempore quodam eundem Cedd redire domum, ac peruenire ad ecclesiam Lindisfaronensem propter conloquium Finani episcopi. Qui ubi prosperatum ei opus euangelii conperit, fecit eum episcopum in gentem Orientalium Saxonum, uocatis ad se in ministerium ordinationis aliis duobus episcopis. Qui accepto gradu episcopatus rediit ad prouinciam, et maiore auctoritate coeptum opus explens, fecit per loca

ecclesias, presbyteros et diaconos ordinauit, qui se in uerbo fidei et ministerio baptizandi adiuuarent, maxime in ciuitate, quae lingua Saxonum Ythancaestir appellatur, sed et in illa, quae Tilaburg cognominatur; quorum prior locus est in ripa Penta amnis, secundus in ripa Tamensis. In quibus, collecto examine famulorum Christi, disciplinam uitae regularis, in quantum rudes adhuc capere poterant, custodiri docuit.

Cumque tempore non paucio in praefata prouincia, gaudente rege, congaudente uniuerso populo, uitae caelestis institutio cotidianum sumeret augmentum, contigit ipsum regem instigante omnium bonorum inimico, propinquorum suorum manu interfici. Erant autem duo germani fratres, qui hoc facinus patrarunt; qui cum interrogarentur, quare hoc facerent, nil aliud respondere potuerunt, nisi ob hoc se iratos fuisse et inimicos regi, quod ille nimium suis parcere soleret inimicis, et factas ab eis iniurias mox obsecrantibus placida mente dimitteret. Talis erat culpa regis, pro qua occideretur, quod euangelica praecepta deuoto corde seruaret. In qua tamen eius morte innoxia, iuxta praedictum uiri Dei, uera est eius culpa punita. Habuerat enim unus ex his, qui eum occiderunt, comitibus illicitum coniugium; quod cum episcopus prohibere et corrigere non posset, excommunicauit eum atque omnibus, qui se audire uellent, praecepit, ne domum eius intrarent, neque de cibis illius acciperent. Contempsit autem rex praeceptum, et rogatus a comite, intrauit epulaturus domum eius. Qui cum abisset, obuiauit ei antistes. At rex intuens eum, mox tremefactus desiluit equo, ceciditque ante pedes eius, ueniam reatus postulans. Nam et episcopus pariter desiluit; sederat enim et ipse in equo. Iratus autem tetigit regem iacentem uirga, quam tenebat manu, et pontificali auctoritate protestatus: ‘Dico tibi,’

inquit, ‘quia noluisti te continere a domu perditionis et damnationis illius, tu in ipsa domu mori habes.’ Sed credendum est, quia talis mors uiri religiosi non solum talem culpam diluerit, sed etiam meritum eius auxerit; quia nimirum ob causam pietatis, quia propter obseruantiam mandatorum Christi contigit.

Successit autem Sigbercto in regnum Suidhelm, filius Sexbaldi, qui baptizatus est ab ipso Cedde in prouincia Orientalium Anglorum, in uico regio, qui dicitur Rendlasham, id est mansio Rendili;

suscepitque eum ascendentem de fonto sancto Aediluald rex ipsius gentis Orientalium Anglorum, frater Anna regis eorundem.

[23] Solebat autem idem uir Domini, cum apud Orientales Saxones episcopatus officio fungeretur, saepius etiam suam, id est Nordanhymbrorum, prouinciam exhortandi gratia reuiscere: quem cum Oidiluald, filius Osualdi regis, qui in Derorum partibus regnum habebat, uirum sanctum et sapientem, probumque moribus uideret, postulauit eum possessionem terrae aliquam a se ad construendum monasterium accipere, in quo ipse rex et frequentius ad deprecandum Dominum uerbumque audiendum aduenire, et defunctus sepeliri deberet.

Nam et se ipsum fideliter credidit multum iuuari eorum orationibus

cotidianis, qui illo in loco Domino seruirent. Habuerat autem idem rex secum fratrem germanum eiusdem episcopi, uocabulo Caelin, uirum aeque Deo deuotum, qui ipsi ac familiae ipsius uerbum et sacramenta fidei, erat enim presbyter, ministrare solebat, per cuius notitiam maxime ad diligendum noscendumque episcopum peruenit. Fauens ergo uotis regis antistes elegit sibi locum monasterii construendi in montibus arduis ac remotis, in quibus latronum magis latibula, ac lustra ferarum, quam habitacula fuisse uidebantur hominum; ut, iuxta prophetiam Isaiae, ‘in cubilibus, in quibus prius dracones habitabant, oriretur uiror calami et iunci,’ id est fructus bonorum operum ibi nascerentur, ubi prius uel bestiae commorari, uel homines bestialiter uiuere consueuerant.

Studens autem uir Domini acceptum monasterii locum primo precibus ac ieiuniis a pristina flagitiorum sorde purgare, et sic in eo monasterii fundamenta iacere, postulauit a rege, ut sibi totum XLmae tempus, quod instabat, facultatem ac licentiam ibidem orationis causa demorandi concederet. Quibus diebus cunctis, excepta dominica, ieiunium ad uesperam usque iuxta morem protelans, ne tunc quidem nisi panis permodicum, et unum ouum gallinaceum cum paruo lacte aqua mixto percipiebat. Dicebat enim hanc esse consuetudinem eorum, a quibus normam disciplinae regularis didicerat, ut accepta nuper loca ad faciendum monasterium uel ecclesiam, prius orationibus ac ieiuniis Domino consecrent. Cumque X dies XLmae restarent, uenit qui clamaret eum ad regem. At ille, ne opus religiosum negotiorum regalium causa intermitteretur, petiit presbyterum suum Cynibillum, qui etiam frater germanus erat ipsius, pia coepta complere. Cui cum ille libenter adquiesceret, expleto studio ieiuniorum et orationis, fecit ibi monasterium, quod nunc Laestingaeu uocatur, et religiosis moribus iuxta ritus Lindisfarnensium, ubi educatus erat, instituit.

Qui cum annis multis et in praefata prouincia episcopatum administraret, et huius quoque monasterii statutis propositis curam gereret, casu contigit, ut ad ipsum monasterium tempore mortalitatis adueniens, tactus ibidem infirmitate corporis obiret. Qui primo quidem foris sepultus est; tempore autem procedente, in eodem monasterio ecclesia est in honorem beatae Dei genetricis de lapide facta, et in illa corpus ipsius ad dexteram altaris reconditum.

Dedit autem episcopus regendum post se monasterium fratri suo Ceadda, qui postea episcopus factus est, ut in sequentibus dicemus. IIII siquidem hi, quos diximus, germani fratres, Cedd, et Cynibill, et Caelin, et Ceadda, quod raro inuenitur, omnes sacerdotes Domini fuere praeclari, et duo ex eis etiam summi sacerdotii gradu functi sunt. Cum ergo episcopum defunctum ac sepultum in prouincia Nordanhymbrorum audirent fratres, qui in monasterio eius erant in prouincia Orientalium Saxonum, uenerunt illo de suo monasterio homines circiter XXX, cupientes ad corpus sui patris, aut uiuere, si sic Deo placeret, aut morientes ibi sepeliri. Qui libenter a suis fratribus et conmilitionibus suscepti, omnes ibidem superueniente praefatae pestilentiae

clade defuncti sunt, excepto uno puerulo, quem orationibus patris sui a morte constat esse seruatum. Nam cum multo post haec tempore uiueret, et scripturis legendis operam daret, tandem didicit se aqua baptismatis non esse regeneratum, et mox fonte lauacri salutaris ablutus, etiam postmodum ad ordinem presbyterii promotus est, multisque in ecclesia utilis fuit; de quo dubitandum non crediderim, quin intercessionibus, ut dixi, sui patris, ad cuius corpus dilectionis ipsius gratia uenerat, sit ab articulo mortis retentus, ut et ipse sic mortem euaderet aeternam, et aliis quoque fratribus ministerium uitae ac salutis docendo exhiberet.

[24] His temporibus rex Osuii, cum acerbis atque intolerabiles pateretur inruptiones saepe dicti regis Merciorum, qui fratrem eius occiderat, ad ultimum necessitate cogente promisit se ei innumera et maiora, quam credi potest, ornamenta regia uel donaria in pretium pacis largiturum, dummodo ille domum rediret, et prouincias regni eius usque ad internicionem uastare desineret. Cumque rex perfidus nullatenus precibus illius assensum praeberet, qui totam eius gentem a paruo usque ad magnum delere atque exterminare decreuerat, respexit ille ad diuinae auxilium pietatis, quo ab impietate barbarica posset eripi; uotoque se obligans: ‘Si paganus,’

inquit, ‘nescit accipere nostra donaria, offeramus ei, qui nouit, Domino Deo nostro.’ Uouit ergo, quia, si uictor existeret, filiam suam Domino sacra uirginitate dicandam offerret, simul et XII possessiones praediorum ad construenda monasteria donaret; et sic cum paucissimo exercitu se certamini dedit. Denique fertur, quia tricies maiorem pagani habuerint exercitum; siquidem ipsi XXX legiones ducibus nobilissimis instructas in bello habuere, quibus Osuii rex cum Alchfrido filio, perparuum, ut dixi, habens exercitum, sed Christo duce confisus, occurrit. Nam alius filius eius Ecgfrid eo tempore in prouincia Merciorum apud reginam Cynuise obses tenebatur; filius autem Osualdi regis Oidiluald, qui eis auxilio esse debuerat, in parte erat aduersariorum, eisdemque contra patriam et patruum suum pugnaturis ductor exstiterat, quamuis ipso tempore pugnandi sese pugnae subtraxerat, euentumque discriminis tuto in loco exspectabat. Inito ergo certamine fugati sunt et caesi pagani, duces regii XXX, qui ad auxilium uenerant, pene omnes interfecti; in quibus Aedilheri, frater Anna regis Orientalium Anglorum, qui post eum regnauit, auctor ipse belli, perditis militibus siue auxiliis interemtus est. Et quia prope fluuium Unuaed pugnatum est, qui tunc prae inundantia pluuiarum late alueum suum immo omnes ripas suas transierat, contigit, ut multo plures aqua fugientes, quam bellantes perderet ensis.

Tum rex Osuii, iuxta quod Domino uouerat, pro conlata sibi uictoria gratias Deo referens dedit filiam suam Aelffredam, quae uixdum unius anni aetatem inpleuerat, perpetua ei uirginitate consecrandam; donatis insuper XII possessiunculis terrarum, in quibus ablato studio militiae terrestres, ad exercendam militiam caelestem, supplicandumque pro pace gentis eius aeterna, deuotioni sedulae monachorum locus facultasque suppeteret. E quibus uidelicet possessiunculis sex in prouincia Derorum, sex in Berniciorum

dedit.

Singulae uero possessiones X erant familiarum, id est simul omnes CXX. Intrauit autem praefata regis Osuii filia Deo dedicanda monasterium, quod nuncupatur Heruteu, id est insula cerui, cui tunc Hild abbatissa praefuit. Quae post biennium comparata possessione X familiarum in loco, qui dicitur Strean-Å'shalch, ibi monasterium construxit;

in quo memorata regis filia primo discipula uitae regularis, deinde etiam magistra extitit, donec completo unde LX annorum numero, ad complexum et nuptias sponsi caelestis uirgo beata intraret. In quo monasterio et ipsa, et pater eius Osuii, et mater eius Aeanfled, et pater matris eius Aeduini, et multi alii nobiles in ecclesia sancti apostoli Petri sepulti sunt. Hoc autem bellum rex Osuii in regione Loidis tertio decimo regni sui anno, XVIIa die Kalendarum Decembrium cum magna utriusque populi utilitate confecit. Nam et suam gentem ab hostili paganorum depopulatione liberauit, et ipsam gentem Merciorum finitimarumque prouinciarum, desecto capite perfido, ad fidei Christianae gratiam conuertit.

Primus autem in prouincia Merciorum, simul et Lindisfarorum ac Mediterraneorum Anglorum, factus est episcopus Diuma, ut supra diximus, qui apud Mediterraneos Anglos defunctus ac sepultus est;

secundus Cellach, qui relicto episcopatus officio uiuens ad Scottiam rediit, uterque de genere Scottorum; tertius Trumheri, de natione quidem Anglorum, sed edoctus et ordinatus a Scottis, qui erat abbas in monasterio, quod dicitur Ingetlingum. Ipse est locus, ubi occisus est rex Osuini, ut supra meminimus. Nam regina Aeanfled propinqua illius, ob castigationem necis eius iniustae, postulauit a rege Osuio, ut donaret ibi locum monasterio construendo praefato Dei famulo Trumhera, quia propinquus et ipse erat regis occisi; in quo uidelicet monasterio orationes assiduae pro utriusque regis, id est et occisi, et eius, qui occidere iussit, salute aeterna fierent.

Idem autem rex Osuii tribus annis post occisionem Pendan regis, Merciorum genti necnon et ceteris australium prouinciarum populis praefuit; qui etiam gentem Pictorum maxima ex parte regno Anglorum subiecit.

Quo tempore donauit praefato Peada filio regis Pendan, eo quod esset cognatus suus, regnum Australium Merciorum, qui sunt, ut dicunt, familiarum quinque milium, discreti fluuio Treanta, ab Aquilonaribus Mercciis, quorum terra est familiarum VII milium. Sed idem Peada proximo uere multum nefarie peremptus est, proditione, ut dicunt, coniugis suae in ipso tempore festi paschalis.

Conpletis autem tribus annis post interfectionem Pendan regis, rebellauerunt aduersus regem Osuii duces gentis Merciorum, Immin, et Eaifa, et Eadberct, leuato in regem Uulfhere filio eiusdem Pendan adulescente, quem occultum seruauerant, et eiectis principibus regis non proprii, fines suos fortiter simul et libertatem receperunt;

sicque cum suo rege liberi, Christo uero regi pro sempiterno in caelis regno seruire gaudebant. Praefuit autem rex idem genti Merciorum annis X et VII,

habuitque primum episcopum Trumheri, de quo supra diximus, secundum Iaruman, tertium Ceaddan, quartum Uynfridum. Omnes hi per ordinem sibimet succedentes sub rege Uulfhere, gentis Merciorum episcopatu sunt functi.

[25] Interea Aidano episcopo de hac uita sublato, Finan pro illo gradum episcopatus a Scottis ordinatus ac missus acceperat. Qui in insula Lindisfarnensi fecit ecclesiam episcopali sedi congruam; quam tamen more Scottorum non de lapide, sed de robore secto totam composuit, atque harundine textit; quam tempore sequente reuerentissimus archiepiscopus Theodorus in honore beati apostoli Petri dedicauit. Sed et episcopus loci ipsius Eadberct ablata harundine, plumbi lamminis eam totam, hoc est et tectum, et ipsos quoque parietes eius, cooperire curauit.

His temporibus quaestio facta est frequens et magna de obseruatione paschae, confirmandis eis, qui de Cantia uel de Galliis aduenerant, quod Scotti dominicum paschae diem contra uniuersalis ecclesiae morem celebrarent. Erat in his acerrimus ueri paschae defensor nomine Ronan, natione quidem Scottus, sed in Galliae uel Italiae partibus regulam ecclesiasticae ueritatis edoctus. Qui cum Finano configens, multos quidem correxit, uel ad solertiores ueritatis inquisitionem accendit, nequaquam tamen Finanum emendare potuit; quin potius, quod esset homo ferocis animi, acerbiores castigando et apertum ueritatis aduersarium reddidit. Obseruabat autem Iacob diaconus quondam, ut supra docuimus, uenerabilis archiepiscopi Paulini, uerum et catholicum pascha cum omnibus, quos ad correctiorem uiam erudire poterat. Obseruabat et regina Eanfled cum suis, iuxta quod in Cantia fieri uiderat, habens secum de Cantia presbyterum catholicae obseruationis, nomine Romanum. Unde nonnumquam contigisse fertur illis temporibus, ut bis in anno uno pascha celebraretur, et cum rex pascha dominicum solutis ieiuniis faceret, tum regina cum suis persistens adhuc in ieiunio diem palmarum celebraret. Haec autem dissonantia paschalis obseruantiae uiuente Aidano patienter ab omnibus tolerabatur, qui patenter intellexerant, quia, etsi pascha contra morem eorum, qui ipsum miserant, facere non potuit, opera tamen fidei, pietatis, et dilectionis, iuxta morem omnibus sanctis consuetum, diligenter exsequi curauit. Unde ab omnibus, etiam his, qui de pascha aliter sentiebant, merito diligebatur; nec solum a mediocribus, uerum ab ipsis quoque episcopis, Honorio Cantuariorum, et Felice Orientalium Anglorum, uenerationi habitus est.

Defuncto autem Finano, qui post illum fuit, cum Colmanus in episcopatum succederet, et ipse missus a Scottia, grauior de obseruatione paschae, necnon et de aliis ecclesiasticae uitae disciplinis controuersia nata est. Unde merito mouit haec quaestio sensus et corda multorum, timentium, ne forte accepto Christianitatis uocabulo, in uacuum currerent aut cucurrissent.

Peruenit et ad ipsas principum aures, Osui uidelicet regis, et filii eius Alchfridi. Quia nimirum Osui a Scottis edoctus ac baptizatus, illorum etiam lingua optime inbutus, nil melius, quam quod illi docuissent, autumabat; porro

Alchfrid magistrum habens eruditionis Christianae Uilfridum uirum doctissimum (nam et Romam prius propter doctrinam ecclesiasticam adierat, et apud Dalfinum archiepiscopum Galliarum Lugdoni multum temporis egerat, a quo etiam tonsurae ecclesiasticae coronam susceperat), huius doctrinam omnibus Scottorum traditionibus iure praeferendam sciebat; unde ei etiam donauerat monasterium XL familiarum in loco, qui dicitur Inhrypum.

Quem uidelicet locum paulo ante eis, qui Scottos sequebantur, in possessionem monasterii dederat. Sed quia illi postmodum data sibi optione magis loco cedere, quam suam mutare consuetudinem uolebant, dedit eum illi, qui dignam loco et doctrinam haberet, et uitam.

Uenerat eo tempore Agilberctus Occidentalium Saxonum episcopus, cuius supra meminimus, amicus Alchfridi regis et Uilfridi abbatis, ad prouinciam Nordanhymbrorum, et apud eos aliquandiu demorabatur;

qui etiam Uilfridum rogatu Alchfridi in praefato suo monasterio presbyterum fecit. Habebat autem secum ipse presbyterum nomine Agathonem. Mota ergo ibi quaestione de pascha, uel tonsura, uel aliis rebus ecclesiasticis, dispositum est, ut in monasterio, quod dicitur Strenashalc, quod interpretatur sinus Fari, cui tunc Hild abbatisa Deo deuota femina praefuit, synodus fieri, et haec quaestio terminari deberet. Ueneruntque illo reges ambo, pater scilicet et filius; episcopi, Colman cum clericis suis de Scottia, Agilberctus cum Agathone et Uilfrido presbyteris. Iacobus et Romanus in horum parte erant; Hild abbatisa cum suis in parte Scottorum, in qua erat etiam uenerabilis episcopus Cedd, iamdudum ordinatus a Scottis, ut supra docuimus, qui et interpres in eo concilio uigilantissimus utriusque partis extitit.

Primusque rex Osui praemissa praefatione, quod oporteret eos, qui uni Deo seruirent, unam uiuendi regulam tenere, nec discrepare in celebratione sacramentorum caelestium, qui unum omnes in caelis regnum expectarent; inquirendum potius, quae esset uerior traditio, et hanc ab omnibus communiter esse sequendam; iussit primo dicere episcopum suum Colmanum, qui esset ritus et unde originem ducens ille, quem ipse sequeretur. Tum Colmanus: 'Pascha,' inquit, 'hoc, quod agere soleo, a maioribus meis accepi, qui me huc episcopum miserunt, quod omnes patres nostri, uiri Deo dilecti, eodem modo celebrasse noscuntur. Quod ne cui contemnendum et reprobandum esse uideatur, ipsum est, quod beatus euangelista Iohannes, discipulus specialiter Domino dilectus, cum omnibus, quibus praeerat, ecclesiis celebrasse legitur.' Quo haec et his similia dicente, iussit rex et Agilberctum proferre in medium morem suae obseruationis, unde initium haberet, uel qua hunc auctoritate sequeretur. Respondit Agilberctus: 'Loquatur, obsecro, uice mea discipulus meus Uilfrid presbyter, quia unum ambo sapimus cum ceteris, qui hic adsident, ecclesiasticae traditionis cultoribus; et ille melius ac manifestius ipsa lingua Anglorum, quam ego per interpretem, potest explanare, quae sentimus.' Tum Uilfrid, iubente rege, ut diceret, ita exorsus est: 'Pasca, quod facimus,'

inquit, 'uidimus Romae, ubi beati apostoli Petrus et Paulus uiuere, docuere, passi sunt, et sepulti, ab omnibus celebrari; hoc in Italia, hoc in Gallia, quas discendi uel orandi studio pertransiuimus, ab omnibus agi conspeximus; hoc Africam, Asiam, Aegyptum, Greciam, et omnem orbem, quacumque Christi ecclesia diffusa est, per diuersas nationes et linguas, uno ac non diuerso temporis ordine geri conperimus; praeter hos tantum et obstinationis eorum complices, Pictos dico et Brettones, cum quibus de duabus ultimis oceani insulis, et his non totis, contra totum orbem stulto labore pugnant.' Cui haec dicenti respondit Colmanus: 'Mirum quare stultum appellare uelitis laborem nostrum, in quo tanti apostoli, qui super pectus Domini recumbere dignus fuit, exempla sectamur; cum ipsum sapientissime uixisse omnis mundus nouerit.' At Uilfridus: 'Absit,' inquit, 'ut Iohannem stultitiae reprehendamus, cum scita legis Mosaicae iuxta litteram seruaret, iudaizante adhuc in multis ecclesia, nec subito ualentibus apostolis omnem legis obseruantiam, quae a Deo instituta est, abdicare (quomodo simulacra, quae a daemonibus inuenta sunt, repudiare omnes, qui ad fidem ueniunt, necesse est), uidelicet ne scandalum facerent eis, qui inter gentes erant Iudaeis. Hinc est enim, quod Paulus Timotheum circumcidit, quod hostias in templo immolauit, quod cum Aquila et Priscilla caput Chorinti totondit; ad nihil uidelicet utile, nisi ad scandalum uitandum Iudaeorum. Hinc quod eidem Paulo Iacobus ait: "Uides, frater, quot milia sunt in Iudaeis, qui crediderunt; et omnes hi aemulatores sunt legis." Nec tamen hodie clarescente per mundum euangelio necesse est, immo nec licitum fidelibus uel circumcidi, uel hostias Deo uictimarum offerre carnalium. Itaque Iohannes secundum legis consuetudinem XIIIa die mensis primi ad uesperam incipiebat celebrationem festi paschalis, nil curans, utrum haec sabbato, an alia qualibet feria proueniret. At uero Petrus cum Romae praedicaret, memor, quia Dominus prima sabbati resurrexit a mortuis, ac mundo spem resurrectionis contulit, ita pascha faciendum intellexit, ut secundum consuetudinem ac praecepta legis XIIIam lunam primi mensis, aequae sicut Iohannes, orientem ad uesperam semper expectaret; et hac exorta, si dominica dies, quae tunc prima sabbati uocabatur, erat mane uentura, in ipsa uespera pascha dominicum celebrare incipiebat, quomodo et nos omnes hodie facere solemus. Sin autem dominica non proximo mane post lunam XIIIam, sed XVIa aut XVIIa aut alia qualibet luna usque ad XXIam esset uentura, expectabat eam, et praecedente sabbato, uespere, sacrosancta paschae sollemnia inchoabat; sicque fiebat, ut dominica paschae dies nonnisi a XVa luna usque ad XXIam seruaretur. Neque haec euangelica et apostolica traditio legem soluit, sed potius adimplet, in qua obseruandum pascha a XIIIa luna primi mensis ad uesperam usque ad XXIam lunam eiusdem mensis ad uesperam praeceptum est; in quam obseruantiam imitandam omnes beati Iohannis successores in Asia post obitum eius, et omnis per orbem ecclesia conuersa est. Et hoc esse uerum pascha, hoc solum fidelibus celebrandum, Niceno concilio non statutum nouiter, sed confirmatum est, ut ecclesiastica docet historia. Unde constat uos, Colmane, neque Iohannis, ut autumatis,

exempla sectari, neque Petri, cuius traditioni scientes contradicitis, neque legi, neque euangelio in obseruatione uestri paschae congruere. Iohannes enim ad legis Mosaicae decreta tempus paschale custodiens, nil de prima sabbati curabat; quod uos non facitis, qui nonnisi prima sabbati pascha celebratis. Petrus a XVa luna usque ad XXIam diem paschae dominicum celebrabat; quod uos non facitis, qui a XIIIa usque ad XXam lunam diem dominicum paschae obseruatis; ita ut XIIIa luna ad uesperam saepius pascha incipiatis, cuius neque lex ullam fecit mentionem, neque auctor ac dator euangelii Dominus in ea, sed in XIIIa uel uetus pascha manducauit ad uesperam, uel noui testamenti sacramenta in commemorationem suae passionis ecclesiae celebranda tradidit. Item lunam XXIam, quam lex maxime celebrandam commendauit, a celebratione uestri paschae funditus eliminatis; sicque, ut dixi, in celebratione summae festiuitatis neque Iohanni, neque Petro, neque legi, neque euangelio concordatis.’

His contra Colmanus: ‘Numquid,’ ait, ‘Anatolius uir sanctus, et in praefata historia ecclesiastica multum laudatus, legi uel euangelio contraria sapuit, qui a XIIIa usque ad XXam pascha celebrandum scripsit? Numquid reuerentissimum patrem nostrum Columbam et successores eius uiros Deo dilectos, qui eodem modo pascha fecerunt, diuinis paginis contraria sapuisse uel egisse credendum est? cum plurimi fuerint in eis, quorum sanctitati caelestia signa, et uirtutum quae fecerunt miracula testimonium praebuerunt; quos ipse sanctos esse non dubitans, semper eorum uitam, mores, et disciplinam sequi non desisto.’

At Uilfridus: ‘Constat,’ inquit, ‘Anatolium uirum sanctissimum, doctissimum, ac laude esse dignissimum; sed quid uobis cum illo, cum nec eius decreta seruetis? Ille enim in pascha suo regulam utique ueritatis sequens, circulum X et VIII annorum posuit, quem uos aut ignoratis, aut agnitum et a tota Christi ecclesia custoditum pro nihilo contemnitis. Ille sic in pascha dominico XIIIam lunam conputauit, ut hanc eadem ipsa die more Aegyptiorum XVam lunam ad uesperam esse fateretur. Sic item XXam die dominico paschae adnotauit, ut hanc declinata eadem die esse XXIam crederet. Cuius regulam distinctionis uos ignorasse probat, quod aliquoties pascha manifestissime ante plenilunium, id est in XIIIa luna, facitis. De patre autem uestro Columba et sequacibus eius, quorum sanctitatem uos imitari, et regulam ac praecepta caelestibus signis confirmata sequi perhibetis, possem respondere; quia multis in iudicio dicentibus Domino, quod in nomine eius prophetauerint, et daemonia eiecerint, et uirtutes multas fecerint, responsurus sit Dominus, quia numquam eos nouerit. Sed absit, ut hoc de patribus uestris dicam, quia iustius multo est de incognitis bonum credere quam malum. Unde et illos Dei famulos ac Deo dilectos esse non nego, qui simplicitate rustica, sed intentione pia Deum dilexerunt. Neque illis multum obesse reor talem paschae obseruantiam, quamdiu nullus aduenerat, qui eis instituti perfectioris decreta, quae sequerentur, ostenderet; quos utique credo, siqui tunc ad eos catholicus calculator adueniret, sic eius monita fuisse secuturos, quomodo ea,

quae nouerant ac didicerant, Dei mandata probantur fuisse secuti. Tu autem et socii tui, si audita decreta sedis apostolicae, immo uniuersalis ecclesiae, et haec litteris sacris confirmata sequi contemnitis, absque ulla dubietate peccatis. Etsi enim patres tui sancti fuerunt, numquid uniuersali, quae per orbem est, ecclesiae Christi eorum est paucitas uno de angulo extremae insulae praeferenda? Et si sanctus erat, ac potens uirtutibus ille Columba uester, immo et noster, si Christi erat, num praeferri potuit beatissimo apostolorum principi, cui Dominus ait: “Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo ecclesiam meam, et portae inferi non praeualebunt aduersus eam, et tibi dabo clauēs regni caelorum”?

Haec perorante Uilfrido, dixit rex: ‘Uerene, Colmane, haec illi Petro dicta sunt a Domino?’ Qui ait: ‘Uere, rex.’ At ille: ‘Habetis,’ inquit, ‘uos proferre aliquid tantae potestatis uestro Columbae datum?’ At ille ait: ‘Nihil.’ Rursum rex: ‘Si utrique uestrum,’ inquit, ‘in hoc sine ulla controuersia consentiunt, quod haec principaliter Petro dicta, et ei clauēs regni caelorum sint datae a Domino?’ Responderunt: ‘Etiam,’ utrique. At ille ita conclusit: ‘Et ego uobis dico, quia hic est ostiarius ille, cui ego contradicere nolo; sed, in quantum noui uel ualeo, huius cupio in omnibus oboedire statutis; ne forte, me adueniente ad fores regni caelorum, non sit qui reserat, auerso illo, qui clauēs tenere probatur.’

Haec dicente rege, fauerunt adsidentes quique siue adstantes maiores una cum mediocribus, et abdicata minus perfecta institutione, ad ea, quae meliora cognouerant, sese transferre festinabant.

[26] Finitoque conflictu, ac soluta contione, Agilbertus domum rediit. Colman uidens spretam suam doctrinam, sectamque esse dispectam, adsumtis his, qui se sequi uoluerunt, id est qui pascha catholicum et tonsuram coronae (nam et de hoc quaestio non minima erat) recipere nolebant, Scottiam regressus est, tractaturus cum suis, quid de his facere deberet. Ceddo, relictis Scottorum uestigiis, ad suam sedem rediit, utpote agnita obseruatione catholici paschae. Facta est autem haec quaestio anno dominicae incarnationis DCLXIIIo, qui fuit annus Osui regis XXIIus, episcopatus autem Scottorum, quem gesserunt in prouincia Anglorum, annus XXXus; siquidem Aidan X et VII annis, Finan decem, Colman tribus episcopatum tenuere.

Reuerso autem patriam Colmano, suscepit pro illo pontificatum Nordanhymbrorum famulus Christi Tuda, qui erat apud Scottos austrinos eruditus, atque ordinatus episcopus, habens iuxta morem prouinciae illius coronam tonsurae ecclesiasticae, et catholicam temporis paschalis regulam obseruans; uir quidem bonus ac religiosus, sed permodico tempore ecclesiam regens. Uenerat autem de Scottia, tenente adhuc pontificatum Colmano, et diligenter ea, quae ad fidem ac ueritatem pertinent, et uerbo cunctos docebat, et opere.

Porro fratribus, qui in Lindisfarnensi ecclesia, Scottis abeuntibus, remanere maluerunt, praepositus est abbas iure uir reuerentissimus ac mansuetissimus Eata, qui erat abbas in monasterio, quod dicitur Mailros; quod aiunt

Colmanum abiturum petisse et inpetrasse a rege Osuii, eo quod esset idem Eata unus de XII pueris Aidani, quos primo episcopatus sui tempore de natione Anglorum erudiendos in Christo accepit. Multum namque eundem episcopum Colmanum rex pro insita illi prudentia diligebat. Ipse est Eata, qui non multo post eidem ecclesiae Lindisfarnensi episcopus factus est. Abiens autem domum Colman adsumsit secum partem ossuum reuerentissimi patris Aidani; partem uero in ecclesia, cui praeerat, reliquit, et in secretario eius condi praecepit.

Quantae autem parsimoniae, cuius continentiae fuerit ipse cum prodecessoribus suis, testabatur etiam locus ille, quem regebant, ubi abeuntibus eis, excepta ecclesia, paucissimae domus repertae sunt, hoc est illae solummodo, sine quibus conuersatio ciuilis esse nullatenus poterat. Nil pecuniarum absque pecoribus habebant. Siquid enim pecuniae a diuitibus accipiebant, mox pauperibus dabant. Nam neque ad susceptionem potentium saeculi, uel pecunias colligi, uel domus praeuideri necesse fuit, qui numquam ad ecclesiam nisi orationis tantum et audiendi uerbi Dei causa ueniebant.

Rex ipse, cum oportunitas exegisset, cum V tantum aut VI ministris ueniebat, et expleta in ecclesia oratione discedebat. Quod si forte eos ibi refici contingeret, simplici tantum et cotidiano fratrum cibo contenti, nil ultra quaerebant. Tota enim fuit tunc sollicitudo doctoribus illis Deo seruiendi, non saeculo; tota cura cordis excolendi, non uentris. Unde et in magna erat ueneratione tempore illo religionis habitus; ita ut, ubicumque clericus aliqui aut monachus adueniret, gaudenter ab omnibus tamquam Dei famulus exciperetur. Etiam si in itinere pergens inueniretur, adcurrerant, et flexa ceruice uel manu signari, uel ore illius se benedici gaudebant; uerbis quoque horum exhortatoriis diligenter auditum praebebant. Sed et diebus dominicis ad ecclesiam siue ad monasteria certatim, non reficiendi corporis, sed audiendi sermonis Dei gratia confluebant; et siquis sacerdotum in uicum forte deueniret, mox congregati in unum uicani uerbum uitae ab illo expetere curabant.

Nam neque alia ipsis sacerdotibus aut clericis uicos adeundi, quam praedicandi, baptizandi, infirmos uisitandi, et, ut breuiter dicam, animas curandi causa fuit; qui in tantum erant ab omni auaritiae peste castigati, ut nemo territoria ac possessiones ad construenda monasteria, nisi a potestatibus saeculi coactus, acciperet. Quae consuetudo per omnia aliquanto post haec tempore in ecclesiis Nordanhymbrorum seruata est. Sed de his satis dictum.

[27] Eodem autem anno dominicae incarnationis DCLXIIIo, facta erat eclipsis solis die tertio mensis Maii, hora circiter Xa diei; quo etiam anno subita pestilentiae lues, depopulatis prius australibus Britanniae plagis, Nordanhymbrorum quoque prouinciam corripuens, atque acerba clade diutius longe lateque desaeuiens, magnam hominum multitudinem strauit. Qua plaga praefatus Domini sacerdos Tuda raptus est de mundo, et in monasterio, quod uocatur Pagnalaeach, honorifice sepultus.

Haec autem plaga Hiberniam quoque insulam pari clade premebat. Erant

ibidem eo tempore multi nobilium simul et mediocrium de gente Anglorum, qui tempore Finani et Colmani episcoporum, relictis insula patria, uel diuinae lectionis, uel continentioris uitae gratia illo secesserant. Et quidam quidem mox se monasticae conuersationi fideliter mancipauerunt, alii magis circueundo per cellas magistrorum, lectioni operam dare gaudebant; quos omnes Scotti libentissime suscipientes, uictum eis cotidianum sine pretio, libros quoque ad legendum, et magisterium gratuitum praebere curabant.

Erant inter hos duo iuuenes magnae indolis de nobilibus Anglorum, Edilhun et Ecgeberct, quorum prior frater fuit Ediluini, uiri aequae Deo dilecti, qui et ipse aeuo sequente Hiberniam gratia legendi adiit, et bene instructus patriam rediit, atque episcopus in prouincia Lindissi factus, multo ecclesiam tempore nobilissime rexit. Hi ergo cum essent in monasterio, quod lingua Scottorum Rathmelsigi appellatur, et omnes socii ipsorum uel mortalitate de saeculo rapti, uel per alia essent loca dispersi, correpti sunt ambo morbo eiusdem mortalitatis, et grauissime adfecti; e quibus Ecgeberct, sicut mihi referebat quidam ueracissimus et uenerandae canitie presbyter, qui se haec ab ipso audisse perhibebat, cum se aestimaret esse moriturum, egressus est tempore matutino de cubiculo, in quo infirmi quiescebant, et residens solus in loco oportuno, coepit sedulus cogitare de actibus suis, et compunctus memoria peccatorum suorum faciem lacrimis abluere, atque intimo ex corde Deum precabatur, ne adhuc mori deberet, priusquam uel praeteritas neglegentias, quas in pueritia siue infantia commiserat, perfectius ex tempore castigaret, uel in bonis se operibus habundantius exerceret. Uouit etiam uotum, quia adeo peregrinus uiuere uellet, ut numquam in insulam, in qua natus est, id est Britanniam, rediret; quia praeter sollemnem canonici temporis psalmodiam, si non ualetudo corporis obsisteret, cotidie psalterium totum in memoriam diuinae laudis decantaret; quia in omni septimana diem cum nocte ieiunus transiret. Cumque finitis lacrimis, precibus, et uotis domum rediret, inuenit sodalem dormientem; et ipse quoque lectulum conscendens, coepit in quietem membra laxare. Et cum paululum quiesceret, expergefactus sodalis respexit eum, et ait: 'O frater Ecgebercte, o quid fecisti? Sperabam, quia pariter ad uitam aeternam intraremus. Uerumtamen scito, quia, quae postulasti, accipies.' Didicerat enim per uisionem et quid ille petisset, et quia petita inpetrasset. Quid multa? Ipse Edilhun proxima nocte defunctus est; at uero Ecgeberct decussa molestia egritudinis conualuit, ac multo postea tempore uiuens, acceptumque sacerdotii gradum condignis ornans actibus, post multa uirtutum bona, ut ipse desiderabat, nuper, id est anno dominicae incarnationis DCCXXVIII^o, cum esset ipse annorum XC, migravit ad regna caelestia. Duxit autem uitam in magna humilitatis, mansuetudinis, continentiae, simplicitatis, et iustitiae perfectione. Unde et genti suae et illis, in quibus exulabat, nationibus Scottorum siue Pictorum, exemplo uiuendi, et instantia docendi, et auctoritate corripiendi, et pietate largiendi de his, quae a diuitibus acceperat, multum profuit. Addidit autem uotis, quae diximus, ut semper in XLma non plus quam semel in die reficeret, non aliud quam panem ac lac

tenuissimum, et hoc cum mensura gustaret; quod uidelicet lac pridie nouum in fiala ponere solebat, et post noctem ablata superficie crassiore, ipse residuum cum modico, ut diximus, pane bibebat. Cuius modum continentiae etiam XL diebus ante natale Domini, totidem quoque post peracta sollemnia pentecostes, hoc est Lmae, semper obseruare curabat.

[28] Interea rex Alchfrid misit Uilfridum presbyterum ad regem Galliarum, qui eum sibi suisque consecrari faceret episcopum. At ille misit eum ordinandum ad Agilberectum, de quo supra diximus, qui, relicta Brittania, Parisiacae ciuitatis factus erat episcopus;

et consecratus est magno cum honore ab ipso, conuenientibus plurimis episcopis in uico regio, qui uocatur In Conpendio. Quo adhuc in transmarinis partibus propter ordinationem demorante, imitatus industriam filii rex Osuii misit Cantiam uirum sanctum, modestum moribus, scripturarum lectione sufficienter instructum, et ea, quae in scripturis agenda didicerat, operibus solerter exsequentem, qui Eburacensis ecclesiae ordinaretur episcopus. Erat autem presbyter uocabulo Ceadda, frater reuerentissimi antistitis Ceddi, cuius saepius meminimus, et abbas monasterii illius, quod uocatur Laestingaeu. Misitque cum eo rex presbyterum suum uocabulo Eadhaedum, qui postea regnante Ecgfrido, Hrypensis ecclesiae praesul factus est. Uerum illi Cantiam peruenientes, inuenerunt archiepiscopum Deusdedit iam migrasse de saeculo, et necdum alium pro eo constitutum fuisse pontificem. Unde deuenterunt ad prouinciam Occidentalium Saxonum, ubi erat Uini episcopus; et ab illo est uir praefatus consecratus antistes, adsumtis in societatem ordinationis duobus de Brettonum gente episcopis, qui dominicum paschae diem, ut saepius dictum est, secus morem canonicum a XIIIa usque ad XXam lunam celebrant.

Non enim erat tunc ullus, excepto illo Uine, in tota Brittania canonice ordinatus episcopus.

Consecratus ergo in episcopum Ceadda maximam mox coepit ecclesiasticae ueritati et castitati curam inpendere; humilitati, continentiae, lectioni operam dare; oppida, rura, casas, uicos, castella propter euangelizandum, non equitando, sed apostolorum more pedibus incedendo peragraré. Erat enim de discipulis Aidani, eisdemque actibus ac moribus iuxta exemplum eius ac fratris sui Ceddi suos instituere curauit auditores. Ueniens quoque Britanniam Uilfrid iam episcopus factus et ipse perplura catholicae obseruationis moderamina ecclesiis Anglorum sua doctrina contulit.

Unde factum est, ut, crescente per dies institutione catholica, Scotti omnes, qui inter Anglos morabantur, aut his manus darent, aut suam redirent ad patriam.

[29] His temporibus reges Anglorum nobilissimi, Osuii prouinciae Nordanhymbrorum, et Ecgberct Cantuariorum, habito inter se consilio, quid de statu ecclesiae Anglorum esset agendum, intellexerat enim ueraciter Osuii, quamuis educatus a Scottis, quia Romana esset catholica et apostolica ecclesia, adsumserunt cum electione et consensu sanctae ecclesiae gentis Anglorum, uirum bonum et aptum episcopatu, presbyterum nomine

Uighardum, de clero Deusdedit episcopi, et hunc antistitem ordinandum Romam miserunt; quatinus accepto ipse gradu archiepiscopatus, catholicos per omnem Britanniam ecclesiis Anglorum ordinare posset antistites.

Uerum Uighard Romam perueniens, priusquam consecrari in episcopatum posset, morte praereptus est, et huiusmodi litterae regi Osuii Britanniam remissae:

Domino excellenti filio Osuio regi Saxonum Uitalianus episcopus, seruus seruorum Dei.

Desiderabiles litteras excellentiae uestrae suscepimus; quas relegentes cognouimus eius piissimam deuotionem, feruentissimumque amorem, quem habet propter beatam uitam; et quia dextera Domini protegente, ad ueram et apostolicam fidem sit conuersus, sperans, sicut in sua gente regnat, ita et cum Christo de futuro conregnare.

Benedicta igitur gens, quae talem sapientissimum et Dei cultorem promeruit habere regem; quia non solum ipse Dei cultor extitit, sed etiam omnes subiectos suos meditatur die ac nocte ad fidem catholicam atque apostolicam pro suae animae redemptione conuerti.

Quis enim audiens haec suauia non laetetur? Quis non exultet et gaudeat in his piis operibus? Quia et gens uestra Christo omnipotenti Deo credidit secundum diuinorum prophetarum uoces, sicut scriptum est in Isaia: ‘In die illa radix Iesse, qui stat in signum populorum, ipsum gentes deprecabuntur.’ Et iterum: ‘Audite insulae, et attendite populi de longe.’ Et post paululum: ‘Parum,’

inquit, ‘est, ut mihi sis seruus ad suscitandas tribus Iacob, et feces Israel conuertendas. Dedi te in lucem gentium, ut sis salus mea usque ad extremum terrae.’ Et rursum: ‘Reges uidebunt, et consurgent principes, et adorabunt.’ Et post pusillum: ‘Dedi te in foedus populi, ut suscitares terram, et possideres hereditates dissipatas, et diceres his, qui uincti sunt: “Exite,” et his, qui in tenebris: “Reuelamini.”’ Et rursum: ‘Ego Dominus uocaui te in iustitia, et adprehendi manum tuam, et seruauit, et dedi te in foedus populi, in lucem gentium, ut aperires oculos caecorum, et educeres de conclusione uinctum, de domo carceris sedentes in tenebris.’

Ecce, excellentissime fili, quam luce clarius est, non solum de uobis, sed etiam de omnibus prophetatum gentibus, quod sint crediturae in Christo omnium conditore. Quamobrem oportet uestram celsitudinem, utpote membrum existens Christi, in omnibus piam regulam sequi perenniter principis apostolorum, siue in pascha celebrandum, siue in omnibus, quae tradiderunt sancti apostoli Petrus et Paulus, qui ut duo luminaria caeli inluminant mundum, sic doctrina eorum corda hominum cotidie inlustrat credentium.’

Et post nonnulla, quibus de celebrando per orbem totum uno uero pascha loquitur:

‘Hominem denique,’ inquit, ‘docibilem et in omnibus ornatum antistitem, secundum uestrorum scriptorum tenorem, minime ualuimus nunc reperire

pro longinquitate itineris. Profecto enim dum huiusmodi apta reppertaque persona fuerit, eum instructum ad uestram dirigemus patriam, ut ipse et uiua uoce, et per diuina oracula omnem inimici zizaniam ex omni uestra insula cum diuino nutu eradicet.

Munuscula a uestra celsitudine beato principi apostolorum directa pro aeterna eius memoria suscepimus, gratiasque ei agimus, ac pro eius incolumitate iugiter Deum deprecamur cum Christi clero. Itaque qui haec obtulit munera, de hac subtractus est lucc, situsque ad limina apostolorum, pro quo ualde sumus contristati, cum hic esset defunctus. Urumtamen gerulis harumstrarum litterarum uestris missis, et beneficia sanctorum, hoc est reliquias beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, et sanctorum martyrum Laurentii, Iohannis, et Pauli, et Gregorii, atque Pancratii eis fecimus dari, uestrae excellentiae profecto omnes contradendas. Nam et coniugi uestrae, nostrae spiritali filiae, direximus per praefatos gerulos crucem clauem auream habentem de sacratissimis uinculis beatorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum; de cuius pio studio cognoscentes, tantum cuncta sedes apostolica una nobiscum laetatur, quantum eius pia opera coram Deo flagrant et uernant. Festinet igitur, quaesumus, uestra celsitudo, ut optamus, totam suam insulam Deo Christo dicare.

Profecto enim habet protectorem, humani generis redemptorem Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum, qui ei cuncta prospera inpertiet, uti nouum Christi populum coaceruet, catholicam ibi et apostolicam constituens fidem. Scriptum est enim: 'Quaerite primum regnum Dei et iustitiam eius, et haec omnia adicientur uobis.' Nimirum enim quaerit et inpetrabit, et ei omnes suae insulae, ut optamus, subdentur.

Paterno itaque affectu salutantes uestram excellentiam, diuinam precamur iugiter clementiam, quae uos uestrosque omnes in omnibus bonis operibus auxiliari dignetur, ut cum Christo in futuro regnetis saeculo. Incolumem excellentiam uestram gratia superna custodiat.' Quis sane pro Uighardo reppertus ac dedicatus sit antistes, libro sequente oportunius dicetur.

[30] Eodem tempore prouinciae Orientalium Saxonum post Suidhelmum, de quo supra diximus, praefuere reges Sigheri et Sebbi, quamuis ipsi regi Merciorum Uulfhera subiecti. Quae uidelicet prouincia cum praefatae mortalitatis clade premeretur, Sigheri cum sua parte populi, relictis Christianae fidei sacramentis, ad apostasiam conuersus est. Nam et ipse rex et plurimi de plebe siue optimatibus, diligentes hanc uitam, et futuram non quaerentes, siue etiam non esse credentes, coeperunt fana, quae derelicta erant, restaurare, et adorare simulacra, quasi per haec possent a mortalitate defendi. Porro socius eius et coheres regni eiusdem, Sebbi, magna fidem perceptam cum suis omnibus deuotione seruauit, magna, ut in sequentibus dicemus, uitam fidelem felicitate conpleuit. Quod ubi rex Uulfheri conperit, fidem uidelicet prouinciae ex parte profanatam, misit ad corrigendum errorem, reuocandamque ad fidem ueritatis prouinciam Iaruman episcopum, qui successor erat Trumheri. Qui multa agens solertia, iuxta quod mihi presbyter,

qui comes itineris illi et cooperator uerbi extiterat, referebat, erat enim religiosus et bonus uir, longe lateque omnia peruagatus, et populum et regem praefatum ad uiam iustitiae reduxit; adeo ut relictis siue destructis fanis arisque, quas fecerant, aperirent ecclesias, ac nomen Christi, cui contradixerant, confiteri gauderent, magis cum fide resurrectionis in illo mori, quam in perfidiae sordibus inter idola uiuere cupientes. Quibus ita gestis, et ipsi sacerdotes doctoresque eorum domum rediere laetantes.

LIBER QUARTUS

[1] Anno memorato praefatae eclypsis et mox sequentis pestilentiae, quo et Colman episcopus unanima catholicorum intentione superatus ad suos reuersus est, Deusdedit VIus ecclesiae Doruuernensis episcopus obiit pridie Iduum Iuliarum; sed et Erconberct rex Cantuariorum eodem mense ac die defunctus, Ecgebercto filio sedem regni reliquit, quam ille susceptam per VIII annos tenuit. Tunc cessante non paucio tempore episcopatu, missus est Romam ab ipso simul et a rege Nordanhymbrorum Osuio, ut in praecedente libro paucis diximus, Uighard presbyter, uir in ecclesiasticis disciplinis doctissimus, de genere Anglorum, petentibus hunc ecclesiae Anglorum archiepiscopum ordinari; missis pariter apostolico papae donariis, et aureis atque argenteis uasis non paucis. Qui ubi Romam peruenit, cuius sedi apostolicae tempore illo Uitalianus praeerat, postquam itineris sui causam praefato papae apostolico patefecit, non multo post et ipse, et omnes pene qui cum eo aduenerant socii, pestilentia superueniente deleti sunt.

At apostolicus papa habito de his consilio, quaesiuit sedulus, quem ecclesiis Anglorum archiepiscopum mitteret. Erat autem in monasterio Niridano, quod est non longe a Neapoli Campaniae, abbas Hadrianus, uir natione Afir, sacris litteris diligenter inbutus, monasterialibus simul et ecclesiasticis disciplinis institutus, Graecae pariter et Latinae linguae peritissimus. Hunc ad se accitum papa iussit episcopatu accepto Britanniam uenire. Qui indignum se tanto gradui respondens, ostendere posse se dixit alium, cuius magis ad suscipiendum episcopatum et eruditio conueniret, et aetas. Cumque monachum quendam de uicino uirginum monasterio, nomine Andream, pontifici offerret, hic ab omnibus, qui nouere, dignus episcopatu iudicatus est. Uerum pondus corporeae infirmitatis, ne episcopus fieri posset, obstitit. Et rursum Hadrianus ad suscipiendum episcopatum actus est; qui petens indutias, si forte alium, qui episcopus ordinaretur, ex tempore posset inuenire.

Erat ipso tempore Romae monachus Hadriano notus, nomine Theodorus, natus Tarso Ciliciae, uir et saeculari et diuina litteratura, et Grece instructus et Latine, probus moribus, et aetate uenerandus, id est annos habens aetatis LX et VI. Hunc offerens Hadrianus pontifici, ut episcopus ordinaretur, obtinuit; his tamen condicionibus interpositis, ut ipse eum perduceret Britanniam, eo quod iam bis partes Galliarum diuersis ex causis adisset, et ob id maiorem huius itineris peragendi notitiam haberet, sufficiensque esset in possessione hominum propriorum; et ut ei doctrinae cooperatore existens diligenter adtenderet, ne quid ille contrarium ueritati fidei, Grecorum more, in ecclesiam, cui praeesset, introduceret. Qui subdiaconus ordinatus IIII exspectauit menses, donec illi coma cresceret, quo in coronam tondi posset; habuerat enim tonsuram more orientalium sancti apostoli Pauli. Qui ordinatus est a Uitaliano papa anno dominicae incarnationis DCLXVIII, sub die VII.

Kalendarum Aprilium, dominica. Et ita una cum Hadriano VI.

Kalendas Iunias Britanniam missus est. Qui cum pariter per mare ad Massiliam, ac deinde per terram Arhelas peruenissent, et tradidissent Iohanni archiepiscopo ciuitatis illius scripta commendaticia Uitaliani pontificis, retenti sunt ab eo, quousque Ebrinus maior domus regiae copiam pergendi, quoquo uellent, tribuit eis. Qua accepta Theodorus profectus est ad Agilberctum Parisiorum episcopum, de quo superius diximus, et ab eo benigne susceptus, et multo tempore habitus est. Hadrianus perrexit primum ad Emme Senonum, et postea ad Faronem Meldorum episcopos, et bene sub eis diutius fuit; coegerat enim eos inminens hiems, ut, ubicumque potuissent, quieti manerent. Quod cum nuntii certi narrassent regi Ecgbercto, esse scilicet episcopum, quem petierant a Romano antistite in regno Francorum, misit illo continuo Raedfridum praefectum suum ad adducendum eum; quo cum uenisset, adsumsit Theodorum cum Ebrini licentia, et perduxit eum ad portum, cui nomen est Quentauc; ubi fatigatus infirmitate aliquantisper moratus est, et, cum conualescere coepisset, nauigauit Britanniam. Hadrianum autem Ebrinus retinuit, quoniam suspicabatur eum habere aliquam legationem imperatoris ad Britanniae reges aduersus regnum, cuius tunc ipse maximam curam gerebat. Sed cum nihil tale illum habere uel habuisse ueraciter conperisset, absoluit eum, et post Theodorum ire permisit. Qui statim ut ad illum uenit, dedit ei monasterium beati Petri apostoli, ubi archiepiscopi Cantiae sepeliri, ut praefatus sum, solent. Praeceperat enim Theodoro abeunti dominus apostolicus, ut in diocesi sua prouideret, et daret ei locum, in quo cum suis apte degere potuisset.

[2] Peruenit autem Theodorus ad ecclesiam suam secundo postquam consecratus est anno, sub die VI. Kalendarum Iuniarum, dominica, et fecit in ea annos XX et unum, menses III, dies XXVI. Moxque peragrata insula tota, quaquauersum Anglorum gentes morabantur, nam et libentissime ab omnibus suscipiebatur, atque audiebatur, rectum uiuendi ordinem, ritum celebrandi paschae canonicum, per omnia comitante et cooperante Hadriano disseminabat. Isque primus erat in archiepiscopis, cui omnis Anglorum ecclesia manus dare consentiret.

Et quia litteris sacris simul et saecularibus, ut diximus, abundanter ambo erant instructi, congregata discipulorum caterua, scientiae salutaris cotidie flumina inrigandis eorum cordibus emanabant; ita ut etiam metricae artis, astronomiae, et arithmeticae ecclesiasticae disciplinam inter sacrorum apicum uolumina suis auditoribus contraderent. Indicio est, quod usque hodie supersunt de eorum discipulis, qui Latinam Grecamque linguam aequae ut propriam, in qua nati sunt, norunt. Neque umquam prorsus, ex quo Britanniam petierunt Angli, feliciora fuere tempora; dum et fortissimos Christianosque habentes reges cunctis barbaris nationibus essent terrori, et omnium uota ad nuper audita caelestis regni gaudia penderent, et quicumque lectionibus sacris cuperent erudiri, haberent in promptu magistros, qui docerent.

Sed et sonos cantandi in ecclesia, quos eatenus in Cantia tantum nouerant,

ab hoc tempore per omnes Anglorum ecclesias discere coeperunt; primusque, excepto Iacobo, de quo supra diximus, cantandi magister Nordanhymbrorum ecclesiis Aeddi cognomento Stephanus fuit, inuitatus de Cantia a reuerentissimo uiro Uilfrido, qui primus inter episcopos, qui de Anglorum gente essent, catholicum uiuendi morem ecclesiis Anglorum tradere didicit.

Itaque Theodorus perlustrans uniuersa, ordinabat locis oportunis episcopos, et ea, quae minus perfecta repperit, his quoque iuuantibus corripiebat. In quibus et Ceadda episcopum cum argueret non fuisse rite consecratum, respondens ipse uoce humillima: ‘Si me,’ inquit, ‘nosti episcopatum non rite suscepisse, libenter ab officio discedo; quippe qui neque me umquam hoc esse dignum arbitrabar; sed oboedientiae causa iussus subire hoc, quamuis indignus, consensi.’ At ille audiens humilitatem responsi eius, dixit non eum episcopatum dimittere debere; sed ipse ordinationem eius denuo catholica ratione consummauit. Eo autem tempore, quo defuncto Deusdedit Doruuernensi ecclesiae episcopus quaerebatur, ordinabatur, mittebatur, Uilfrid quoque de Brittania Galliam ordinandus est missus; et quoniam ante Theodorum rediit, ipse etiam in Cantia presbyteros et diaconos, usquedum archiepiscopus ad sedem suam perueniret, ordinabat. At ipse ueniens mox in ciuitate Hrofi, ubi defuncto Damiano episcopatus iam diu cessauerat, ordinauit uirum magis ecclesiasticis disciplinis institutum, et uitae simplicitate contentum, quam in saeculi rebus strenuum cui nomen erat Putta;

maxime autem modulandi in ecclesia more Romanorum, quem a discipulis beati papae Gregorii didicerat, peritum.

[3] Eo tempore prouinciae Merciorum rex Uulfheri praefuit, qui, cum mortuo Iarumanno sibi quoque suisque a Theodoro episcopum dari peteret, non eis nouum uoluit ordinare episcopum; sed postulauit a rege Osuio, ut illis episcopus Ceadda daretur, qui tunc in monasterio suo, quod est in Lastingae, quietam uitam agebat, Uilfrido administrante episcopatum Eboracensis ecclesiae, nec non et omnium Nordanhymbrorum, sed et Pictorum, quousque rex Osuii imperium protendere poterat. Et quia moris erat eidem reuerentissimo antistiti opus euangelii magis ambulando per loca, quam equitando perficere, iussit eum Theodorus, ubicumque longius iter instaret, equitare, multumque renitentem, studio et amore pii laboris, ipse eum manu sua leuauit in equum; quia nimirum sanctum esse uirum conperiit, atque equo uehi, quo esset necesse, compulit. Susceptum itaque episcopatum gentis Merciorum simul et Lindisfarorum Ceadda, iuxta exempla patrum antiquorum, in magna uitae perfectione administrare curauit; cui etiam rex Uulfheri donauit terram L familiarum ad construendum monasterium in loco, qui dicitur Adbaruae, id est Ad Nemus, in prouincia Lindissi, in quo usque hodie instituta ab ipso regularis uitae uestigia permanent.

Habuit autem sedem episcopalem in loco, qui uocatur Lyccidfelth, in quo et defunctus ac sepultus est; ubi usque hodie sequentium quoque prouinciae illius episcoporum sedes est. Fecerat uero sibi mansionem non longe ab ecclesia remotiorem; in qua secretius cum paucis, id est VII siue VIII,

fratribus, quoties a labore et ministerio uerbi uacabat, orare ac legere solebat. Qui cum in illa prouincia duobus annis ac dimidio ecclesiam gloriosissime rexisset, adfuit superno dispensante iudicio tempus, de quo loquitur Ecclesiastes, quia: ‘Tempus mittendi lapides, et tempus colligendi.’ Superuenit namque clades diuinitus missa, quae per mortem carnis uiuos ecclesiae lapides de terrenis sedibus ad aedificium caeleste transferret. Cumque plurimis de ecclesia eiusdem reuerentissimi antistitis de carne subtractis, ueniret hora ipsius, ut transiret ex hoc mundo ad Dominum, contigit die quadam, ut in praefata mansione forte ipse cum uno tantum fratre, cui uocabulum erat Ouini, commoraretur, ceteris eius sociis pro causa oportuna ad ecclesiam reuersis. Erat autem idem Ouini monachus magni meriti, et pura intentione supernae retributionis mundum derelinquens, dignusque per omnia, cui Dominus specialiter sua reuelaret arcana, dignus, cui fidem narranti audientes accommodarent. Uenerat enim cum regina Aedilthyde de prouincia Orientalium Anglorum, eratque primus ministrorum, et princeps domus eius. Qui cum crescente fidei feruore saeculo abrenuntiare disponderet, non hoc segniter fecit; sed adeo se mundi rebus exuit, ut relictis omnibus, quae habebat, simplici tantum habitu indutus, et securim atque asciam in manu ferens, ueniret ad monasterium eiusdem reuerentissimi patris, quod uocatur Laestingaeu. Non enim ad otium, ut quidam, sed ad laborem se monasterium intrare signabat. Quod ipsum etiam facto monstrauit; nam quo minus sufficebat meditationi scripturarum, eo amplius operi manuum studium impendebat. Denique cum episcopo in praefata mansione pro suae reuerentia deuotionis inter fratres habitus, cum illi intus lectioni uacabant, ipse foris, quae opus esse uidebantur, operabatur. Qui cum die quadam tale aliquid foris ageret, digressis ad ecclesiam sociis, ut dicere coeperam, et episcopus solus in oratorio loci lectioni uel orationi operam daret, diuit repente, ut postea referebat, uocem suauissimam cantantium atque laetantium de caelo ad terras usque descendere; quam uidelicet uocem ab Euroaustro, id est ab alto brumalis exortus, primo se audisse dicebat, ac deinde paulatim eam sibi adpropriare, donec ad tectum usque oratorii, in quo erat episcopus, perueniret; quod ingressa, totum impleuit, atque in gyro circumdedit. At ille dum sollicitus in ea, quae audiebat, animum intenderet, audiuit denuo, transacto quasi dimidiae horae spatio, ascendere de tecto eiusdem oratorii idem laetitiae canticum, et ipsa, qua uenerat, uia ad caelos usque cum ineffabili dulcedine reuerti. Qui cum aliquantulum horae quasi adtonitus maneret, et, quid haec essent, solerti animo scrutaretur, aperuit episcopus fenestram oratorii, et sonitum manu faciens, ut saepius consueuerat, siqui foris esset, ad se intrare praecepit. Introiuit ille concitus, cui dixit antistes: ‘Uade cito ad ecclesiam, et hos VII fratres huc uenire facito; tu quoque simul adesto.’ Qui cum uenissent, primo admonuit eos, ut uirtutem dilectionis et pacis ad inuicem et ad omnes fideles seruarent;

instituta quoque disciplinae regularis, quae uel ab ipso didicissent, et in ipso uidissent, uel in patrum praecedentium factis siue dictis inuenissent,

indefessa instantia sequerentur.

Deinde subiunxit diem sui obitus iam proxime instare. ‘Namque hospes,’ inquit, ‘ille amabilis, qui fratres nostros uisitare solebat, ad me quoque hodie uenire, meque de saeculo euocare dignatus est. Propter quod reuertentes ad ecclesiam dicite fratribus, ut et meum exitum Domino precibus commendent, et suum quoque exitum, cuius hora incerta est, uigiliis, orationibus, bonis operibus praeuenire meminerint.’ Cumque haec et huiusmodi plura loqueretur, atque illi percepta eius benedictione iam multum tristes exissent, rediit ipse solus, qui carmen caeleste audierat, et prosternens se in terram : ‘Obsecro,’ inquit, ‘pater; licet aliquid interrogare?’ ‘Interroga,’ inquit, ‘quod uis.’ At ille: ‘Obsecro,’

inquit, ‘ut dicas, quod erat canticum illud laetantium, quod audiui, uenientium de caelis super oratorium hoc, et post tempus redeuntium ad caelos?’ Respondet ille: ‘Si uocem carminis audisti, et caelestes superuenire coetus cognouisti, praecipio tibi in nomine Domini, ne hoc cuiquam ante meum obitum dicas. Re uera autem angelorum fuere spiritus, qui me ad caelestia, quae semper amabam, ac desiderabam, praemia uocare uenerunt, et post dies VII se redituros, ac me secum adducturos esse promiserunt.’ Quod quidem ita, ut dictum ei erat, opere completum est. Nam confestim langore corporis tactus est, et hoc per dies ingrauescente, septimo, ut promissum ei fuerat, die, postquam obitum suum dominici corporis et sanguinis perceptione muniuit, soluta ab ergastulo corporis anima sancta, ducentibus, ut credi fas est, angelis comitibus aeterna gaudia petiuit. Non autem mirum, si diem mortis uel potius diem Domini laetus aspexit, quem semper, usquedum ueniret, sollicitus expectare curauit.

Namque inter plura continentiae, humilitatis, doctrinae, orationum, uoluntariae paupertatis, et ceterarum uirtutum merita, in tantum erat timori Domini subditus, in tantum nouissimorum suorum in omnibus operibus suis memor, ut, sicut mihi frater quidam de his, qui me in scripturis erudiebant, et erat in monasterio ac magisterio illius educatus, uocabulo Trumberct, referre solebat, si forte legente eo uel aliud quid agente, repente flatus uenti maior adsurgeret, continuo misericordiam Domini inuocaret, et eam generi humano propitiari rogaret. Si autem uiolentior aura insisteret, iam clauso codice procideret in faciem, atque obnixius orationi incumberet. At si procella fortior aut nimbus perurgeret, uel etiam corusci ac tonitrua terras et aera terrent, tunc ueniens ad ecclesiam sollicitus orationibus ac psalmis, donec serenitas aeris rediret, fixa mente uacaret. Cumque interrogaretur a suis, quare hoc faceret, respondebat: ‘Non legistis, quia “intonuit de caelo Dominus, et Altissimus dedit uocem suam; misit sagittas suas, et dissipauit eos, fulgora multiplicauit, et conturbauit eos?” Mouet enim aera Dominus, uentos excitat, iaculatur fulgora, de caelo intonat, ut terrigenas ad timendum se suscitet, ut corda eorum in memoriam futuri iudicii reuocet, ut superbiam eorum dissipet, et conturbet audaciam, reducto ad mentem tremendo illo tempore, quando ipse caelis ac terris ardentibus uenturus est in nubibus, in potestate magna et

maiestate, ad iudicandos uiuos et mortuos.

Propter quod,' inquit, 'oportet nos admonitioni eius caelesti, debito cum timore et amore respondere; ut, quoties aere commoto manum quasi ad feriendum minitans exerit, nec adhuc tamen percutit, mox inploremus eius misericordiam, et discussis penetralibus cordis nostri, atque expurgatis uitiorum ruderibus, solliciti, ne umquam percuti mereamur, agamus.'

Conuenit autem reuelationi et relationi praefati fratris de obitu huius antistitis etiam sermo reuerentissimi patris Ecgbercti, de quo supra diximus, qui dudum cum eodem Ceadda adolescente, et ipse adulescens in Hibernia monachicam in orationibus et continentia, et meditatione diuinarum scripturarum uitam sedulus agebat. Sed illo postmodum patriam reuerso, ipse peregrinus pro Domino usque ad finem uitae permansit. Cum ergo ueniret ad eum longo post tempore gratia uisitationis de Britannia uir sanctissimus et continentissimus, uocabulo Hygbald, qui erat abbas in prouincia Lindissi, et ut sanctos decebat, de uita priorum patrum sermonem facerent, atque hanc aemulari gauderent, interuenit mentio reuerentissimi antistitis Ceadda, dixitque Ecgberct: 'Scio hominem in hac insula adhuc in carne manentem, qui, cum uir ille de mundo transiret, uidit animam Ceddi fratris ipsius cum agmine angelorum descendere de caelo, et adsumta secum anima eius, ad caelestia regna redire.' Quod utrum de se an de alio aliquo diceret, nobis manet incertum, dum tamen hoc, quod tantus uir dixit, quia uerum sit, esse non possit incertum.

Obiit autem Ceadda sexto die Nonarum Martiarum, et sepultus est primo quidem iuxta ecclesiam sanctae Mariae; sed postmodum constructa ibidem ecclesia beatissimi apostolorum principis Petri, in eandem sunt eius ossa translata. In quo utroque loco, ad indicium uirtutis illius, solent crebra sanitarum miracula operari. Denique nuper freneticus quidam, dum per cuncta errando discurreret, deuenit ibi uespere, nescientibus siue non curantibus loci custodibus, et ibi tota nocte requiescens, mane sanato sensu egressus, mirantibus et gaudentibus cunctis, quid ibi sanitatis Domino largiente consequeretur, ostendit. Est autem locus idem sepulchri tumba lignea in modum domunculi facta coopertus, habente foramen in pariete, per quod solent hi, qui causa deuotionis illo adueniunt, manum suam inmittere, ac partem pulueris inde adsumere; quam cum in aquas miserint, atque has infirmantibus iumentis siue hominibus gustandas dederint, mox infirmitatis ablata molestia, cupitae sospitatis gaudia redibunt.

In cuius locum ordinauit Theodorus Uynfridum, uirum bonum ac modestum, qui, sicut prodecessores eius, prouinciis Merciorum et Mediterraneorum Anglorum et Lindisfarorum episcopatus officio praeesset; in quibus cunctis Uulpheri, qui adhuc supererat, sceptrum regni tenebat. Erat autem Uynfrid de clero eius, cui ipse successerat, antistitis, et diaconatus officio sub eo non paucio tempore fungebatur.

[4] Interea Colmanus, qui de Scottia erat episcopus, relinquens Brittaniam, tulit secum omnes, quos in Lindisfarnensium insula congregauerat Scottos;

sed et de gente Anglorum uiros circiter XXX, qui utrique monachicae conuersationis erant studiis inbuti. Et relictis in ecclesia sua fratribus aliquot, primo uenit ad insulam Hii, unde erat ad praedicandum uerbum Anglorum genti destinatus.

Deinde secessit ad insulam quandam paruam, quae ad occidentalem plagam ab Hibernia procul secreta, sermone Scottico Inisboufinde, id est insula uitulae albae, nuncupatur. In hanc ergo perueniens, construxit monasterium, et monachos inibi, quos de utraque natione collectos adduxerat, collocauit. Qui cum inuicem concordare non possent, eo quod Scotti tempore aestatis, quo fruges erant colligendae, relicto monasterio per nota sibi loca dispersi uagarentur, at uero hieme succedente redirent, et his, quae Angli praeparauerant, communiter uti desiderarent; quaesiuit Colmanus huic dissensioni remedium, et circuiens omnia prope uel longe, inuenit locum in Hibernia insula aptum monasterio construendo, qui lingua Scottorum Magaco nominatur; emitque partem eius non grandem, ad constituendum ibi monasterium, a comite, ad cuius possessionem pertinebat; ea condicione addita, ut pro ipso etiam, qui eis locum commodaret, consistentes ibi monachi Domino preces offerrent. Et constructo statim monasterio, iuuante etiam comite ac uicinis omnibus, Anglos ibidem locauit, relictis in praefata insula Scottis.

Quod uidelicet monasterium usque hodie ab Anglis tenetur incolis.

Ipsam namque est, quod nunc grande de modico effectum, Muigaco consueue uocatur, et conuersis iamdudum ad meliora instituta omnibus, egregium examen continet monachorum, qui de prouincia Anglorum ibidem collecti, ad exemplum uenerabilium patrum sub regula et abbate canonico in magna continentia et sinceritate proprio labore manuum uiuant.

[5] Anno dominicae incarnationis DCLXXmo, qui est annus secundus ex quo Britanniam uenit Theodorus, Osui rex Nordanhymbrorum pressus est infirmitate, qua et mortuus est anno aetatis suae LVIIIo. Qui in tantum eo tempore tenebatur amore Romanae et apostolicae institutionis, ut, si ab infirmitate saluaretur, etiam Romam uenire, ibique ad loca sancta uitam finire disponderet, Uilfridumque episcopum ducem sibi itineris fieri, promissa non parua pecuniarum donatione, rogaret. Qui defunctus die XV Kalendarum Martiarum Ecgfridum filium regni heredem reliquit; cuius anno regni IIIo, Theodorus cogit concilium episcoporum, una cum eis, qui canonica patrum statuta et diligerent, et nossent, magistris ecclesiae pluribus. Quibus pariter congregatis, diligenter ea, quae unitati pacis ecclesiasticae congruerent, eo quo pontificem decebat, animo, coepit obseruanda docere. Cuius synodicae actionis huiusmodi textus est:

In nomine Domini Dei et Saluatoris nostri Iesu Christi, regnante in perpetuum ac gubernante suam ecclesiam eodem Domino Iesu Christo, placuit conuenire nos iuxta morem canonum uenerabilium, tractaturos de necessariis ecclesiae negotiis. Conuenimus autem die XXoIIIo mensis Septembris, indictione prima, in loco, qui dicitur Herutford;

ego quidem Theodorus, quamuis indignus, ab apostolica sede destinatus Doruuernensis ecclesiae episcopus, et consacerdos ac frater noster, reuerentissimus Bisi, Orientalium Anglorum episcopus;

quibus etiam frater et consacerdos noster Uilfrid, Nordanhymbrorum gentis episcopus, per proprios legatarios adfuit. Adfuerunt et fratres ac consacerdotes nostri, Putta, episcopus castelli Cantuariorum, quod dicitur HrofescÅ”stir, Leutherius, episcopus Occidentalium Saxonum, Uynfrid, episcopus prouinciae Merciorum.

Cumque in unum conuenientes iuxta ordinem quique suum resedissemus: ‘Rogo,’ inquam, ‘dilectissimi fratres, propter timorem et amorem Redemptoris nostri, ut in commune omnes pro nostra fide tractemus; ut, quaeque decreta ac definita sunt a sanctis ac probabilibus patribus, incorrupte ab omnibus nobis seruentur.’ Haec et alia quamplura, quae ad caritatem pertinebant, unitatemque ecclesiae conseruandam, proscutus sum. Cumque explessem praelocutionem, interrogauì unumquemque eorum per ordinem, si consentirent ea, quae a patribus canonice sunt antiquitus decreta, custodire. Ad quod omnes consacerdotes nostri respondentes dixerunt: ‘Optime omnibus placet, quaeque definierunt sanctorum canones patrum, nos quoque omnes alacri animo libentissime seruare.’

Quibus statim protuli eundem librum canonum, et ex eodem libro X capitula, quae per loca notaueram, quia maxime nobis necessaria sciebam, illis coram ostendi, et, ut haec diligentius ab omnibus susciperentur, rogaui.

Primum capitulum: ‘Ut sanctum diem paschae in commune omnes seruemus dominica post XIIIam lunam mensis primi.’

Secundum: ‘Ut nullus episcoporum parrochiam alterius inuadat, sed contentus sit gubernatione creditae sibi plebis.’

III: ‘Ut, quaeque monasteria Deo consecrata sunt, nulli episcoporum liceat ea in aliquo inquietare, nec quicquam de eorum rebus uiolenter abstrahere.’

IIII: ‘Ut ipsi monachi non migrent de loco ad locum, hoc est de monasterio ad monasterium, nisi per dimissionem proprii abbatis; sed in ea permaneant oboedientia, quam tempore suae conuersionis promiserunt.’

V: ‘Ut nullus clericorum relinquens proprium episcopum, passim quolibet discurrat, neque alicubi ueniens absque commendaticijs litteris sui praesulis suscipiatur. Quod si semel susceptus noluerit inuitatus redire, et susceptor, et is, qui susceptus est, excommunicationi subiacebit.’

VI: ‘Ut episcopi atque clerici peregrini contenti sint hospitalitatis munere oblato; nullique eorum liceat ullum officium sacerdotale, absque permissu episcopi, in cuius parrochia esse cognoscitur, agere.’

VII: ‘Ut bis in anno synodus congregetur. Sed quia diuersae causae impediunt, placuit omnibus in commune, ut Kalendis Augustis in loco, qui appellatur Clofeshoch, semel in anno congregemur.’

VIII: ‘Ut nullus episcoporum se praeferat alteri per ambitionem; sed omnes agnoscant tempus et ordinem consecrationis suae.’

VIII capitulum in commune tractatum est: ‘Ut plures episcopi crescente

numero fidelium augerentur'; sed de hac re ad praesens siluimus.

X capitulum pro coniugiis: 'Ut nulli liceat nisi legitimum habere conubium. Nullus incestum faciat, nullus coniugem propriam, nisi, ut sanctum euangelium docet, fornicationis causa, relinquat. Quod si quisquam propriam expulerit coniugem legitimo sibi matrimonio coniunctam, si Christianus esse recte uoluerit, nulli alteri copuletur; sed ita permaneat, aut propriae reconcilietur coniugi.'

His itaque capitulis in commune tractatis ac definitis, ut nullum deinceps ab aliquo nostrum oriatur contentionis scandalum, aut alia pro aliis diuulgarentur, placuit, ut, quaeque definita sunt, unusquisque nostrum manus propriae subscriptione confirmaret. Quam sententiam definitionis nostrae Titillo notario scribendam dictaui.

Actum in mense et indictione supra scripta. Quisquis igitur contra hanc sententiam, iuxta decreta canonum, nostra etiam consensione ac subscriptione manus nostrae confirmatam, quoquo modo uenire, eamque infringere temptauerit, nouerit se ab omni officio sacerdotali et nostra societate separatam. Diuina nos gratia in unitate sanctae suae ecclesiae uiuentes custodiat incolumes.

Facta est autem haec synodus anno ab incarnatione Domini DCLXX tertio, quo anno rex Cantuariorum Ecgberct mense Iulio obierat, succedente in regnum fratre Hlothere, quod ipse annos XI et menses VII tenuit. Bisi autem episcopus Orientalium Anglorum, qui in praefata synodo fuisse perhibetur, ipse erat successor Bonifatii, cuius supra meminimus, uir multae sanctitatis et religionis. Nam Bonifatio post X et VII episcopatus sui annos defuncto, episcopus ipse pro eo, Theodoro ordinante, factus est. Quo adhuc superstiti, sed grauissima infirmitate ab administrando episcopatu prohibito, duo sunt pro illo, Aecci et Baduini, electi et consecrati episcopi;

ex quo usque hodie provincia illa duos habere solet episcopos.

[6] Non multo post haec elapso tempore, offensus a Uynfrido Merciorum episcopo per meritum cuiusdam inoboedientiae, Theodorus archiepiscopus deposuit eum de episcopatu post annos accepti episcopatus non multos; et in loco eius ordinauit episcopum Sexuulfum, qui erat constructor et abbas monasterii, quod dicitur Medeshamsted, in regione Gyruiorum. Depositus uero Uynfrid rediit ad monasterium suum, quod dicitur Adbaruae, ibique in optima uitam conuersatione finiuit.

Tum etiam Orientalibus Saxonibus, quibus eo tempore praefuerunt Sebbi et Sigheri, quorum supra meminimus, Earconualdum constituit episcopum in ciuitate Lundonia; cuius uidelicet uiri, et in episcopatu, et ante episcopatum, uita et conuersatio fertur fuisse sanctissima, sicut etiam nunc caelestium signa uirtutum indicio sunt. Etenim usque hodie feretrum eius caballarium, quo infirmus uehi solebat, seruatum a discipulis eius, multos febricitantes, uel alio quolibet incommodo fessos, sanare non desistit. Non solum autem subpositi eidem feretro, uel adpositi curantur egroti, sed et astulae de illo abscissae, atque ad infirmos adlatae citam illis solent adferre medellam.

Hic sane priusquam episcopus factus esset, duo praeclara monasteria, unum sibi, alterum sorori suae Aedilburgae construxerat, quod utrumque regularibus disciplinis optime instituerat; sibi quidem in regione Sudergeona, iuxta fluuium Tamensem, in loco, qui uocatur Cerotaesei, id est Ceroti insula; sorori autem in Orientalium Saxonum prouincia, in loco, qui nuncupatur In Berecingum, in quo ipsa Deo deuotarum mater ac nutrix posset existere feminarum. Quae suscepto monasterii regimine, condignam se in omnibus episcopo fratre, et ipsa recte uiuendo, et subiectis regulariter ac pie consulendo praeiuit; ut etiam caelestia indicio fuere miracula.

[7] In hoc etenim monasterio plura uirtutum sunt signa patrata, quae et ad memoriam aedificationemque sequentium ab his, qui nouere, descripta habentur a multis; e quibus et nos aliqua historiae nostrae ecclesiasticae inserere curauimus. Cum tempestas saepe dictae cladis late cuncta depopulans, etiam partem monasterii huius illam, qua uiri tenebantur, inuasisset, et passim cotidie raperentur ad Dominum; sollicita mater congregationis, qua hora etiam eam monasterii partem, qua ancellarum Dei caterua a uirorum erat secreta contubernio, eadem plaga tangeret, crebrius in conuentu sororum perquirere coepit, quo loci in monasterio corpora sua poni, et cymiterium fieri uellent, cum eas eodem, quo ceteros exterminio raptari e mundo contingeret. Cumque nihil certi responsi, tametsi saepius inquirens, a sororibus accepisset, accepit ipsa cum omnibus certissimum supernae prouisionis responsum. Cum enim nocte quadam, expletis matutinae laudis psalmodiis, egressae de oratorio famulae Christi, ad sepulchra fratrum, qui eas ex hac luce praecesserant, solitas Domino laudes decantarent, ecce subito lux emissa caelitus, ueluti linteam magnum, uenit super omnes, tantoque eas stupore perculit, ut etiam canticum, quod canebant, tremefactae intermitterent. Ipse autem splendor emissae lucis, in cuius conparatione sol meridianus uideri posset obscurus, non multo post illo eleuatus de loco, in meridianum monasterii, hoc est ad occidentem oratorii, secessit, ibique aliquandiu remoratus, et ea loca operiens, sic uidentibus cunctis ad caeli se alta subduxit; ut nulli esset dubium, quin ipsa lux, quae animas famularum Christi esset ductura uel susceptura in caelis, etiam corporibus earum locum, in quo requietura, et diem resurrectionis essent expectatura, monstraret. Cuius radius lucis tantus extitit, ut quidam de fratribus senior, qui ipsa hora in oratorio eorum cum alio iuniore positus fuerat, referret mane, quod ingressi per rimas ostiorum uel fenestrarum radii lucis, omnem diurni luminis uiderentur superare fulgorem.

[8] Erat in eodem monasterio puer trium circiter non amplius annorum, Aesica nomine, qui propter infantilem adhuc aetatem in uirginum Deo dedicatarum solebat cella nutrirī, ibique meditari. Hic praefata pestilentia tactus, ubi ad extrema peruenit, clamauit tertio unam de consecratis Christo uirginibus, proprio eam nomine quasi praesentem alloquens, ‘Eadgyd, Eadgyd, Eadgyd’; et sic terminans temporalem uitam, intrauit aeternam. At uirgo illa, quam moriens uocabat, mox in loco, quo erat, eadem adtacta

infirmirate, ipso, quo uocitata est die de hac luce subtracta, et illum, qui se uocauit, ad regnum caeleste secuta est.

Item quaedam ex eisdem ancellis Dei, cum praefato tacta morbo, atque ad extrema esset perducta, coepit subito circa mediam noctem clamare his, quae sibi ministrabant, petens, ut lucernam, quae inibi accensa erat, extinguerent. Quod cum frequenti uoce repeteret, nec tamen ei aliquis obtemperaret, ad extremum intulit: ‘Scio, quod me haec insana mente loqui arbitramini; sed iam nunc non ita esse cognoscite; nam uere dico uobis, quia domum hanc tanta luce inpletam esse perspicio, ut uestra illa lucerna mihi omnimodis esse uideatur obscura.’ Et cum ne adhuc quidem talia loquenti quisquam responderet, uel adsensum praeberet, iterum dixit: ‘Accendite ergo lucernam illam, quamdiu uultis; attamen scitote, quia non est mea;

nam mea lux, incipiente aurora, mihi aduentura est.’ Coepitque narrare, quia apparuerit sibi quidam uir Dei, qui eodem anno fuerat defunctus, dicens, quod adueniente diluculo perennem esset exitura ad lucem. Cuius ueritas uisionis cita circa exortum diei puellae morte probata est.

[9] Cum autem et ipsa mater pia Deo deuotae congregationis Aedilburga esset rapienda de mundo, apparuit uisio miranda cuidam de sororibus, cui nomen erat Torctgyd, quae multis iam annis in eodem monasterio commorata, et ipsa semper in omni humilitate ac sinceritate Deo seruire satagebat, et adiutrix disciplinae regularis eidem matri existere, minores docendo uel castigando curabat. Cuius ut uirtus, iuxta apostolum, in infirmitate perficeretur, tacta est repente grauissimo corporis morbo, et per annos VIII pia Redemptoris nostri prouisione multum fatigata; uidelicet ut, quicquid in ea uitii sordidantis inter uirtutes per ignorantiam uel incuriam resedisset, totum hoc caminus diutinae tribulationis excoqueret. Haec ergo quadam nocte incipiente crepusculo, egressa de cubiculo, quo manebat, uidit manifeste quasi corpus hominis, quod esset sole clarius, sindone inuolutum in sublime ferri, elatum uidelicet de domo, in qua sorores pausare solebant. Cumque diligentius intueretur, quo trahente leuaretur sursum haec, quam contemplabatur species corporis gloriosi, uidit, quasi funibus auro clarioribus in superna tolleretur, donec caelis patentibus introducta, amplius ab illa uideri non potuit. Nec dubium remansit cogitanti de uisione, quin aliquis de illa congregatione citius esset moriturus, cuius anima per bona, quae fecisset, opera, quasi per funes aureos leuanda esset ad caelos; quod re uera ita contigit. Nam non multis interpositis diebus, Deo dilecta mater congregationis ipsius, ergastulo carnis educta est; cuius talem fuisse constat uitam, ut nemo, qui eam nouerit, dubitare debeat, quin ei exeunti de hac uita caelestis patriae patuerit ingressus.

In eodem quoque monasterio quaedam erat femina sanctimonialis, et ad saeculi huius dignitatem nobilis, et in amore futuri saeculi nobilior; quae ita multis iam annis omni corporis fuerat officio destituta, ut ne unum quidem mouere ipsa membrum ualeret. Haec ubi corpus abbatissae uenerabilis in ecclesiam delatum, donec sepulturae daretur, cognouit, postulauit se illo

adferri, et in modum orantium ad illud adclinari. Quod dum fieret, quasi uiuentem adlocuta, rogauit, ut apud misericordiam pii Conditoris inpetraret, se a tantis tamque diutinis cruciatibus absolui. Nec multo tardius exaudita est; nam post dies XII et ipsa educta ex carne temporales afflictiones aeterna mercede mutauit.

Cum uero praefata Christi famula Torctgyd tres adhuc annos post obitum dominae in hac uita teneretur, in tantum ea, quam praediximus, infirmitate decocta est, ut uix ossibus hereret; ad ultimum, cum tempus iam resolutionis eius instaret, non solum membrorum ceterorum, sed et linguae motu caruit. Quod dum tribus diebus et totidem noctibus ageretur, subito uisione spiritali recreata, os et oculos aperuit; aspectansque in caelum, sic ad eam, quam intuebatur, uisionem coepit loqui: ‘Gratus mihi est multum aduentus tuus, et bene uenisti.’ Et hoc dicto parumper reticuit, quasi responsum eius, quem uidebat et cui loquebatur, expectans.

Rursumque, quasi leuiter indignata, subiunxit: ‘Nequaquam hoc laeta ferre queo.’ Rursumque modicum silens, tertio dixit: ‘Si nullatenus hodie fieri potest, obsecro, ne sit longum spatium in medio.’ Dixit, et, sicut antea, parum silens, ita sermonem conclusit: ‘Si omnimodis ita definitum est, neque hanc sententiam licet inmutari, obsecro, ne amplius quam haec solummodo proxima nox intersit.’ Quibus dictis, interrogata a circumsedentibus, cum quo loqueretur: ‘Cum carissima,’

inquit, ‘mea matre Aedilburge.’ Ex quo intellexere, quod ipsa ei tempus suae transmigrationis proximum nuntiare uenisset. Nam et ita, ut rogabat, transacta una die et nocte, soluta carnis simul et infirmitatis uinculis ad aeternae gaudia salutis intrauit.

[10] Successit autem Aedilburgi in officio abbatissae deuota Deo famula, nomine Hildilid, multisque annis, id est usque ad ultimam senectutem, eidem monasterio strenuissime, et in obseruantia disciplinae regularis, et in earum, quae ad communes usus pertinent, rerum prouidentia praefuit. Cui cum propter angustiam loci, in quo monasterium constructum est, placuisset, ut ossa famulorum famularumque Christi, quae ibidem fuerant tumulata, tollerentur, et transferrentur omnia in ecclesiam beatae Dei genetricis, unoque conderentur in loco; quoties ibi claritas luminis caelestis, quanta saepe flagrantia mirandi apparuerit odoris, quae alia sint signa ostensa, in ipso libro, de quo haec excerpsimus, quisque legerit, inueniet.

Sane nullatenus praetereundum arbitror miraculum sanitatis, quod ad ipsum cymiterium Deo dicatae congregationis factum idem libellus refert. Erat quippe in proximo comes quidam, cuius uxor ingruente oculis caligine subita, tantum per dies eadem molestia crebrescente grauata est, ut ne minimam quidem lucis alicuius posset particulam uidere. Cui, dum aliquandiu caecitatis huius nocte clausa maneret, repente uenit in mentem, quia, si ad monasterium delata uirginum sanctimonialium, ad reliquias sanctorum peteret, perditam posset recipere lucem. Nec distulit, quin continuo, quod mente conceperat, expleret. Perducta namque a puellis suis ad monasterium, quia in

proximo erat, ubi fidem suae sanationis integram se habere professa est, introducta est ad cymiterium; et, cum ibidem diutius flexis genibus oraret, nihilo tardius meruit exaudiri. Nam exsurgens ab oratione, priusquam exiret de loco, petitae lucis gratiam recepit;

et quae famularum manibus adducta fuerat, ipsa libero pedum incessu domum laeta reuersa est; quasi ad hoc solummodo lucem amitteret temporalem, ut, quanta sanctos Christi lux in caelis, quae gratia uirtutis possideret, sua sanatione demonstraret.

[11] Eo tempore praeerat regno Orientalium Saxonum, ut idem etiam libellus docet, uir multum Deo deuotus, nomine Sebbi, cuius supra meminimus. Erat enim religiosus actibus, crebris precibus, piis elimosynarum fructibus plurimum intentus; uitam priuatam et monachicam cunctis regni diuitiis et honoribus praeferens, quam et olim iam, si non obstinatus coniugis animus diuortium negaret, relicto regno subisset. Unde multis uisum et saepe dictum est, quia talis animi uirum, episcopum magis quam regem ordinari deceret.

Cumque annos XXX in regno miles regni caelestis exegisset, correptus est corporis infirmitate permaxima, qua et mortuus est; ammonuitque coniugem, ut uel tunc diuino se seruitio pariter mancipient, cum amplius pariter mundum amplecti, uel potius mundo seruire non possent. Quod dum egre inpetraret ab ea, uenit ad antistitem Lundoniae ciuitatis, uocabulo Ualdheri, qui Erconualdo successerat;

et per eius benedictionem habitum religionis, quem diu desiderabat, accepit. Attulit autem eidem et summam pecuniae non paruam pauperibus erogandam, nil omnimodis sibi reseruans; sed pauper spiritu magis propter regnum caelorum manere desiderans.

Qui cum ingrauescente praefata egritudine, diem sibi mortis imminere sensisset, timere coepit homo animi regalis, ne ad mortem ueniens tanto adfectus dolore aliquid indignum suae personae uel ore proferret, uel aliorum motu gereret membrorum. Unde accito ad se praefato urbis Lundoniae, in qua tunc ipse manebat, episcopo, rogauit, ne plures eo moriente quam ipse episcopus et duo sui ministri adessent. Quod dum episcopus libentissime se facturum promitteret, non multo post idem uir Dei, dum membra sopori dedisset, uidit uisionem consolatoriam, quae omnem ei anxietatem memoratae sollicitudinis auferret, insuper et, qua die esset hanc uitam terminaturus, ostenderet. Uidit enim, ut post ipse referebat, tres ad se uenisse uiros claro indutos habitu; quorum unus residens ante lectulum eius, stantibus his, qui secum aduenerant, comitibus, et interrogantibus de statu eius, quem languentem uisitare uenerant, dixit, quod anima eius, et sine ullo dolore, et cum magno lucis splendore esset egressura de corpore; sed et tertium exinde diem, quo esset moriturus, insinuauit. Quod ita utrumque, ut ex uisione didicit, conpletum est. Nam die dehinc tertio, conpleta hora nona, subito quasi leuiter obdormiens, sine ullo sensu doloris emisit spiritum.

Cuius corpori tumulando praeparauerant sarcophagum lapideum; sed cum huic corpus inponere coepissent, inuenerunt hoc mensura palmi longius esse

sarcofago. Dolantes ergo lapidem in quantum ualebant, addiderunt longitudini sarcofagi quasi duorum mensuram digitorum.

Sed nec sic quidem corpus capiebat. Unde facta difficultate tumulandi, cogitabant aut aliud quaerere loculum, aut ipsum corpus, si possent, in genibus inflectendo breuiare, donec ipso loculo caperetur. Sed mira res et non nisi caelitus facta, ne aliquid horum fieri deberet, prohibuit. Nam subito adstante episcopo, et filio regis eiusdem ac monachi Sighardo, qui post illum cum fratre Suefredo regnauit, et turba hominum non modica, inuentum est sarcofagum illud congruae longitudinis ad mensuram corporis, adeo ut a parte capitis etiam ceruical posset interponi; a parte uero pedum mensura IIII digitorum in sarcofago corpus excederet. Conditus est autem in ecclesia beati doctoris gentium, cuius edoctus monitis caelestia sperare didicerat.

[12] Quartus Occidentalium Saxonum antistes Leutherius fuit. Siquidem primus Birinus, secundus Agilbertus, tertius exstitit Uini. Cumque mortuus esset Coinualch, quo regnante idem Leutherius episcopus factus est, acceperunt subreguli regnum gentis, et diuisum inter se tenuerunt annis circiter X; ipsisque regnantibus defunctus est ille, et episcopatu functus Haeddi pro eo, consecratus a Theodoro in ciuitate Lundonia. Cuius episcopatus tempore deuictis atque amotis subregulis, Caedualia suscepit imperium, et, cum duobus annis hoc tenuisset, tandem superni regni amore compunctus reliquit, eodem adhuc praesule ecclesiam gubernante; ac Romam abiens, ibi uitam finiuit, ut in sequentibus latius dicendum est.

Anno autem dominicae incarnationis DCLXXVI, cum Aedilred rex Merciorum, adducto maligno exercitu, Cantiam uastaret et ecclesias ac monasteria sine respectu pietatis uel diuini timoris fedaret, ciuitatem quoque Hrofi, in qua erat Putta episcopus, quamuis eo tempore absens, communi clade absumsit. Quod ille ubi conperiit, ecclesiam uidelicet suam rebus ablatis omnibus depopulatam, diuertit ad Sexuulfum Merciorum antistitem, et accepta ab eo possessione ecclesiae cuiusdam et agelli non grandis, ibidem in pace uitam finiuit, nil omnino de restaurando episcopatu suo agens; quia, sicut et supra diximus, magis in ecclesiasticis quam in mundanis rebus erat industrius; sed in illa solum ecclesia Deo seruiens, et ubicumque rogabatur, ad docenda ecclesiae carmina diuertens. Pro quo Theodorus in ciuitate Hrofi Cuichelmum consecrauit episcopum. Sed illo post non multum temporis prae inopia rerum ab episcopatu decedente, atque ad alia loca secedente, Gebmundum pro eo substituit antistitem.

Anno dominicae incarnationis DCLXXVIII, qui est annus imperii regis Ecgfridi VIII., apparuit mense Augusto stella, quae dicitur cometa;

et tribus mensibus permanens, matutinis horis oriebatur, excelsam radiantis flammae quasi columnam praeferens. Quo etiam anno orta inter ipsum regem Ecgfridum et reuerentissimum antistitem Uilfridum dissensione, pulsus est idem antistes a sede sui episcopatus, et duo in locum eius substituti episcopi, qui Nordanhymbrorum genti praeessent; Bosa uidelicet, qui Derorum, et Eata, qui Berniciorum prouinciam gubernaret; hic in ciuitate Eburaci, ille in

Hagustaldensi siue in Lindisfarnensi ecclesia cathedram habens episcopalem, ambo de monachorum collegio in episcopatus gradum adsciti. Cum quibus et Eadhaed in prouinciam Lindisfarorum. quam nuperrime rex Ecgfrid, superato in bello et fugato Uulphere, obtinuerat, ordinatur episcopus. Et hunc primum eadem prouincia proprium accepit praesulem, II Ediluini, III Eadgarum, IIII Cyniberctum, quem in praesenti habet. Habebat enim ante Eadhaedum antistitem Sexuulfum, qui etiam Merciorum et Mediterraneorum Anglorum simul episcopus fuit; unde et expulsus de Lindissi, in illarum prouinciarum regimine permansit. Ordinati sunt autem Eadhaed, Bosa, et Eata Eboraci ab archiepiscopo Theodoro; qui etiam post tres abscissionis Uilfridi annos, horum numero duos addidit antistites, Tunberctum ad ecclesiam Hagustaldensem, remanente Eata ad Lindisfarnensem, et Trumuini ad prouinciam Pictorum, quae tunc temporis Anglorum erat imperio subiecta. Eadhaedum de Lindissi reuersum, eo quod Aedilred prouinciam recepisset, Hrypensi ecclesiae praefecit.

[13] Pulsus est autem ab episcopatu suo Uilfrid, et multa diu loca peruagatus, Romam adiit, Brittaniam rediit; et si propter inimicitias memorati regis in patria siue parrochia sua recipi non potuit, non tamen ab euangelizandi potuit ministerio cohiberi;

siquidem diuertens ad prouinciam Australium Saxonum, quae post Cantuarios ad austrum et ad occidentem usque ad Occidentales Saxones pertingit, habens terram familiarum VII milium, et eo adhuc tempore paganis cultibus seruiebat; huic uerbum fidei et lauacrum salutis ministrabat. Erat autem rex gentis ipsius Aedilualch, non multo ante baptizatus in prouincia Merciorum, praesente ac suggerente rege Uulphere a quo etiam egressus de fonte, loco filii susceptus est; in cuius signum adoptionis duas illi prouincias donauit, Uectam uidelicet insulam, et Meanuarorum prouinciam in gente Occidentalium Saxonum. Itaque episcopus, concedente, immo multum gaudente rege, primos prouinciae duces ac milites sacrosancto fonte abluebat; uerum presbyteri Eappa, et Padda, et Burghelm, et Oiddi ceteram plebem, uel tunc uel tempore sequente baptizabant. Porro regina, nomine Eabae, in sua, id est Huicciorum prouincia fuerat baptizata. Erat autem filia Eanfridi fratris anheri, qui ambo cum suo populo Christiani fuere. Ceterum tota prouincia Australium Saxonum diuini nominis et fidei erat ignara.

Erat autem ibi monachus quidam de natione Scottorum, uocabulo Dicul, habens monasteriolum permodicum in loco, qui uocatur Bosanhamm, siluis et mari circumdatum, et in eo fratres V siue VI, in humili et paupere uita Domino famulantes. Sed prouincialium nullus eorum uel uitam aemulari, uel praedicationem curabat audire.

Euangelizans autem genti episcopus Uilfrid, non solum eam ab erumna perpetuae damnationis, uerum et a clade infanda temporalis interitus eripuit. Siquidem tribus annis ante aduentum eius in prouinciam nulla illis in locis pluuias ceciderat, unde et fames acerbissima plebem inuadens impia nece prostrauit. Denique ferunt, quia saepe XL simul aut L homines inedia

macerati procederent ad praecipitium aliquod siue ripam maris, et iunctis misere manibus, pariter omnes aut ruina perituri, aut fluctibus obsorbendi deciderent. Uerum ipso die, quo baptismus fidei gens suscepit illa, descendit pluuia serena, sed copiosa, refluuit terra, rediit uiridantibus aruis annus laetus et frugifer. Sicque abiecta prisca superstitione, exsufflata idolatria, cor omnium et caro omnium exultauerunt in Deum uiuum;

intellegentes eum, qui uerus est Deus, et interioribus se bonis et exterioribus caelesti gratia ditasse. Nam et antistes cum uenisset in prouinciam, tantamque ibi famis poenam uideret, docuit eos piscando uictum quaerere. Namque mare et flumina eorum piscibus abundabant; sed piscandi peritia genti nulla nisi ad anguillas tantum inerat. Collectis ergo undecumque retibus anguillaribus, homines antistitis miserunt in mare, et diuina se iuuante gratia, mox cepere pisces diuersi generis CCC. Quibus trifariam diuisis, C pauperibus dederunt, centum his, a quibus retia acceperant, centum in suos usus habebant. Quo beneficio multum antistes cor omnium in suum conuertit amorem, et libentius eo praedicante caelestia sperare coeperunt, cuius ministerio temporalia bona sumserunt.

Quo tempore rex Aedilualch donauit reuerentissimo antistiti Uilfrido terram LXXXVII familiarum, ubi suos homines, qui exules uagabantur, recipere posset, uocabulo Selā seu quod dicitur Latine insula uituli marini. Est enim locus undique mari circumdatus praeter ab occidente, unde habet ingressum amplitudinis quasi iactus fundae;

qualis locus a Latinis paeninsula, a Grecis solet cherronesos uocari. Hunc ergo locum cum accepisset episcopus Uilfrid, fundauit ibi monasterium, ac regulari uita instituit, maxime ex his, quos secum adduxerat, fratribus; quod usque hodie successores eius tenere noscuntur. Nam ipse illis in partibus annos V, hoc est usque ad mortem Ecgridi regis, merito omnibus honorabilis, officium episcopatus et uerbo exercebat et opere. Et quoniam illi rex cum praefata loci possessione omnes, qui ibidem erant, facultates cum agris et hominibus donauit, omnes fide Christi institutos, unda baptismatis abluit; inter quos, seruos et ancillas ducentos quinquaginta; quos omnes ut baptizando a seruitute daemonica saluauit, etiam libertate donando humanae iugo seruitutis absoluit.

[14] In quo tunc monasterio nonnulla caelestis gratiae dona specialiter ostensa fuisse perhibentur; utpote ubi nuper expulsa diaboli tyrannide Christus iamregnare coeperat; e quibus unum, quod mihi reuerentissimus antistes Acca sepius referre, et a fidelissimis eiusdem monasterii fratribus sibi relatum asserere solebat, memoriae mandare commodum duximus.

Eodem ferme tempore, quo ipsa prouincia nomen Christi suscepit, multas Britannie prouincias mortalitas saeua corripiebat. Quae cum praefatum quoque monasterium, cui tunc regendo religiosissimus Christi sacerdos, uocabulo Eappa, praefuit, nutu diuinae dispensationis attingeret; multique siue de his, qui cum antistite illo uenerant, siue de illis, qui de eadem prouincia Saxonum nuper ad fidem fuerant uocati, passim de hac uita

raperentur; uisum est fratribus triduanum ieiunium agere, et diuinam suppliciter obsecrare clementiam, ut misericordiam sibi dignaretur inpendere, et siue periclitantes hoc morbo a praesenti morte liberaret, seu raptos e mundo a perpetua animae damnatione seruaret.

Erat tunc temporis in eodem monasterio puerulus quidam de natione Saxonum, nuper uocatus ad fidem, qui eadem tactus infirmitate, non pauco tempore recubans in lectulo iacebat. Cum ergo secunda memorati ieiunii ac supplicationum dies ageretur, contigit forte ipsum puerum hora ferme secunda diei in loco, in quo eger iacebat, solum inueniri; cui diuina dispositione subito beatissimi apostolorum principes dignati sunt apparere. Erat enim puer multum simplicis ac mansueti animi, sinceraque deuotione sacramenta fidei, quae susceperat, seruans. Salutantes ergo illum uerbis piissimis apostoli dicebant: 'Noli timere, fili, mortem, pro qua sollicitus es; nos enim te hodierna die ad caelestia sumus regna perducturi. Sed primum expectare habes, donec missae celebrentur, ac uiatico dominici corporis ac sanguinis accepto, sic infirmitate simul et morte absolutus, ad aeterna in caelis gaudia subleueris. Clama ergo ad te presbyterum Eappan, et dicito illi, quia Dominus exaudiuit preces uestras, et deuotionem ac ieiunia propitius aspexit; neque aliquis de hoc monasterio siue adiacentibus ei possessiunculis hac clade ultra moriturus est; sed omnes, qui alicubi de uestris hac egritudine laborant, resurrecturi a langore, pristina sunt sospitate recuperandi, praeter te solum qui hodierna es die liberandus a morte, et ad uisionem Domini Christi, cui fideliter seruisti, perducendus in caelum; quod diuina uobis misericordia per intercessionem religiosi ac Deo dilecti regis Osualdi, qui quondam genti Nordanhymbrorum et regni temporalis auctoritate et Christianae pietatis, quae ad regnum perenne ducit, deuotione sublimiter praefuit, conferre dignata est. Hac etenim die idem rex ab infidelibus in bello corporaliter extinctus, mox ad sempiterna animarum gaudia adsumtus in caelum, et electorum est sociatus agminibus. Quaerant in suis codicibus, in quibus defunctorum est adnotata depositio, et inuenient illum hac, ut diximus, die raptum esse de saeculo. Celebrent ergo missas per cuncta monasterii oratoria huius, siue pro gratiarum actione exauditae suae deprecationis, siue etiam in memoriam praefati regis Osualdi, qui quondam ipsorum genti praeerat, ideoque pro eis, quasi pro suae gentis aduenis, supplex orabat ad Dominum; et cunctis conuenientibus ad ecclesiam fratribus, communicent omnes sacrificiis caelestibus, et ita soluto ieiunio corpus quoque suis reficiant alimentis.'

Quae cum omnia uocato ad se presbytero puer uerba narrasset, interrogauit eum sollicitus, quales essent habitu uel specie uiri, qui sibi apparuissent. Respondit: 'Praeclari omnino habitus, et uultus erant laetissimi ac pulcherrimi, quales numquam ante uideram, neque aliquos hominum tanti decoris ac uenustatis esse posse credebam. Unus quidem adtonsus erat, ut clericus, alius barbam habebat prolixam; dicebantque, quod unus eorum Petrus, alius uocaretur Paulus; et ipsi essent ministri Domini et Saluatoris nostri Iesu Christi, ad tuitionem nostri monasterii missi ab ipso de caelis.'

Credidit ergo uerbis pueri presbyter, ac statim egressus requisiiuit in annale suo, et inuenit eadem ipsa die Osualdum regem fuisse peremtum; uocatisque fratribus, parari prandium, missas fieri, atque omnes communicare more solito praecepit; simul et infirmanti puero de eodem sacrificio dominicae oblationis particulam deferri mandauit.

Quibus ita gestis, non multo post eadem ipsa die puer defunctus est, suaque morte probauit uera fuisse uerba, quae ab apostolis Christi audierat. Sed et hoc eius uerbis testimonium perhibuit, quod nemo praeter ipsum tempore illo ex eodem est monasterio raptus de mundo.

Ex qua nimirum uisione multi, qui haec audire potuerunt, et ad exorandam in aduersis diuinam clementiam, et ad salutaria ieiuniorum remedia subeunda sunt mirabiliter accensi; et ex eo tempore non solum in eodem monasterio, sed et in plerisque locis aliis, coepit annuatim eiusdem regis ac militis Christi natalicius dies missarum celebratione uenerari.

[15] Interea superueniens cum exercitu Caedualla, iuuenis strenuissimus de regio genere Geuissorum, cum exularet a patria sua, interfecit regem Aedilualch, ac prouinciam illam saeua caede ac depopulatione attriuit; sed mox expulsus est a ducibus regis, Bercthuno et Andhuno, qui deinceps regnum prouinciae tenuerunt;

quorum prior postea ab eodem Caedualla, cum esset rex Geuissorum, occisus est, et prouincia grauiore seruitio subacta. Sed et Ini, qui post Caeduallan regnauit, simili prouinciam illam adflictione plurimo annorum tempore mancipauit. Quare factum est, ut toto illo tempore episcopum proprium habere nequiret; sed reuocato domum Uilfrido primo suo antistite, ipsi episcopo Geuissorum, id est Occidentalium Saxonum, qui essent in Uenta ciuitate, subiacerent.

[16] Postquam ergo Caedualla regno potitus est Geuissorum, cepit et insulam Uectam, quae eatenus erat tota idolatriae dedita, ac stragica caede omnes indigenas exterminare, ac suae prouinciae homines pro his substituere contendit, uoto se obligans, quamuis necdum regeneratus, ut ferunt, in Christo, quia, si cepisset insulam, quartam partem eius simul et praedae Domino daret. Quod ita soluit, ut hanc Uilfrido episcopo, qui tunc forte de gente sua superueniens aderat, utendam pro Domino offerret. Est autem mensura eiusdem insulae, iuxta aestimationem Anglorum, mille ducentarum familiarum; unde data est episcopo possessio terrae CCCarum familiarum. At ipse partem, quam accepit, commendauit cuidam de clericis suis, cui nomen Bernuini, et erat filius sororis eius, dans illi presbyterum nomine Hiddila, qui omnibus, qui saluari uellent, uerbum ac lauacrum uitae ministraret.

Ubi silentio praetereundum non esse reor, quod in primitias eorum, qui de eadem insula credendo saluati sunt, duo regii pueri fratres uidelicet Arualdi regis insulae, speciali sunt Dei gratia coronati.

Siquidem imminentibus insulae hostibus, fuga lapsi sunt de insula, et in proximam Iutorum prouinciam translati; ubi, cum delati in locum, qui uocatur Ad Lapidem, occulendos se a facie regis uictoris credidissent, proditi sunt,

atque occidi iussi. Quod cum audisset abbas quidam et presbyter uocabulo Cyniberct, habens non longe ab inde monasterium in loco, qui uocatur Hreutford, id est uadum harundinis, uenit ad regem, qui tunc eisdem in partibus occultus curabatur a uulneribus, quae ei inflicta fuerant proelianti in insula Uecta; postulauitque ab eo, ut, si necesse esset pueros interfici, prius eos liceret fidei Christianae sacramentis inbui.

Concessit rex, et ipse instructos eos uerbo ueritatis, ac fonte Saluatoris ablutos, de ingressu regni aeterni certos reddidit.

Moxque illi instante carnifice mortem laeti subiere temporalem, per quam se ad uitam animae perpetuam non dubitabant esse transituros.

Hoc ergo ordine, postquam omnes Britanniarum prouinciae fidem Christi susceperant, suscepit et insula Uecta, in quam tamen ob erumnam externa subiectionis nemo gradum ministerii ac sedis episcopalis ante Danihelem, qui nunc Occidentalium Saxonum est episcopus, accepit.

Sita est autem haec insula contra medium Australium Saxonum et Geuissorum, interposito pelago latitudinis trium milium, quod uocatur Soluente; in quo uidelicet pelago bini aestus oceani, qui circum Britanniam ex infinito oceano septentrionali erumpunt, sibimet inuicem cotidie conpugnantes occurrunt ultra ostium fluminis Homelea, quod per terras Iutorum, quae ad regionem Geuissorum pertinent, praefatum pelagus intrat; finitoque conflictu in oceanum refusi, unde uenerant, redeunt.

[17] His temporibus audiens Theodorus fidem ecclesiae Constantinopoli per heresim Eutychetis multum esse turbatam, et ecclesias Anglorum, quibus praeerat, ab huiusmodi labe immunes perdurare desiderans, collecto uenerabilium sacerdotum doctorumque plurimorum coetu, cuius essent fidei singuli, sedulus inquirebat, omniumque unanimum in fide catholica repperit consensum; et hunc synodalibus litteris ad instructionem memoriamque sequentium commendare curauit, quarum uidelicet litterarum istud exordium est:

In nomine Domini nostri Iesu Christi Saluatoris, imperantibus dominis piissimis nostris Ecgfrido rege Hymbronensium, anno Xo regni eius, sub die XV Kalendas Octobres, indictione VIIIa; et Aedilredo rege Mercinensium, anno sexto regni eius; et Alduulfo rege Estranglorum, anno XVIIo regni eius; et Hlothario rege Cantuariorum, regni eius anno VIIo; praesidente Theodoro, gratia Dei archiepiscopo Britanniae insulae et ciuitatis Doruuernis; una cum eo sedentibus ceteris episcopis Britanniae insulae uiris uenerabilibus, praepositis sacrosanctis euangeliiis, in loco, qui Saxonico uocabulo Haethfelth nominatur, pariter tractantes, fidem rectam et orthodoxam exposuimus; sicut Dominus noster Iesus Christus incarnatus tradidit discipulis suis, qui praesentialiter uiderunt, et audierunt sermones eius, atque sanctorum patrum tradidit symbolum, et generaliter omnes sancti et uniuersales synodi, et omnis probabiliū catholicae ecclesiae doctorum chorus. Hos itaque sequentes, nos pie atque orthodoxe, iuxta diuinitus inspiratam doctrinam eorum professi credimus consonanter, et confitemur secundum sanctos patres, proprie et

ueraciter Patrem et Filium et Spiritum Sanctum trinitatem in unitate consubstantiali et unitatem in trinitate, hoc est unum Deum in tribus subsistentiis, uel personis consubstantialibus, aequalis gloriae et honoris.

Et post multa huiusmodi, quae ad rectae fidei confessionem pertinebant, haec quoque sancta synodus suis litteris addit:

Suscipimus sanctas et uniuersales quinque synodos beatorum et Deo acceptabilium patrum; id est, qui in Nicaea congregati fuerunt CCCX et VIII contra Arrium impiissimum et eiusdem dogmata; et in Constantinopoli CL contra uesaniam Macedonii et Eudoxii et eorum dogmata; et in Efeso primo ducentorum contra ncquissimum Nestorium et eiusdem dogmata; et in Calcedone DCrum et XXX contra Eutychen, et Nestorium, et eorum dogmata; et iterum in Constantinopoli quinto congregati sunt concilio in tempore Iustiniani minoris contra Theodorum, et Theodoreti et Iba epistulas, et eorum dogmata contra Cyrillum.

Et paulo post:

Et synodum, quae facta est in urbe Roma in tempore Martini papae beatissimi, indictione VIIla, imperante Constantino piissimo anno nono, suscipimus. Et glorificamus Dominum nostrum Iesum, sicut isti glorificauerunt; nihil addentes uel subtrahentes; et anathematizamus corde et ore, quos anathematizarunt, et quos susceperunt, suscipimus; glorificantes Deum Patrem sine initio, et Filium eius unigenitum ex Patre generatum ante saecula, et Spiritum Sanctum procedentem ex Patre et Filio inenarrabiliter, sicut praedicauerunt hi, quos memorauius supra, sancti apostoli, et prophetae, et doctores. Et nos omnes subscribimus, qui cum Theodoro archiepiscopo fidem catholicam exposuimus.

[18] Intererat huic synodo, pariterque catholicae fidei decreta firmabat uir uenerabilis Iohannes archicantator ecclesiae sancti apostoli Petri, et abbas monasterii beati Martini, qui nuper uenerat a Roma per iussionem papae Agathonis, duce reuerentissimo abbate Biscopo cognomine Benedicto, cuius supra meminimus. Cum enim idem Benedictus construxisset monasterium Britanniae in honorem beatissimi apostolorum principis, iuxta ostium fluminis Uiuri, uenit Romam cum cooperatore ac socio eiusdem operis Ceolfrido, qui post ipsum eiusdem monasterii abbas fuit, quod et ante sepius facere consueuerat, atque honorifice a beatae memoriae papa Agathone susceptus est; petiitque et accepit ab eo, in munimentum libertatis monasterii, quod fecerat, epistulam priuilegii ex auctoritate apostolica firmatam; iuxta quod Ecgfridum regem uoluisse ac licentiam dedisse nouerat, quo concedente et possessionem terrae largiente, ipsum monasterium fecerat.

Accepit et praefatum Iohannem abbatem Britanniam perducendum;

quatenus in monasterio suo cursum canendi annum, sicut ad sanctum Petrum Romae agebatur, edoceret; egitque abba Iohannes, ut iussionem acceperat pontificis, et ordinem uidelicet, ritumque canendi ac legendi uiua uoce praefati monasterii cantores edocendo, et ea, quae totius anni circulus in celebratione dierum festorum poscebat, etiam litteris mandando; quae

hactenus in eodem monasterio seruata, et a multis iam sunt circumquaque transscripta. Non solum autem idem Iohannes ipsius monasterii fratres docebat, uerum de omnibus pene eiusdem prouinciae monasteriis ad audiendum eum, qui cantandi erant periti, confluebant. Sed et ipsum per loca, in quibus doceret, multi inuitare curabant.

Ipse autem excepto cantandi uel legendi munere, et aliud in mandatis ab apostolico papa acceperat, ut, cuius esset fidei Anglorum ecclesia, diligenter edisceret, Romamque rediens referret. Nam et synodum beati papae Martini, centum quinque episcoporum consensu non multo ante Romae celebratam, contra eos maxime, qui unam in Christo operationem et uoluntatem praedicabant, secum ueniens adtulit; atque in praefato religiosissimi abbatis Benedicti monasterio transscribendam commodauit. Tales namque eo tempore fidem Constantinopolitanae ecclesiae multum conturbauerunt; sed Domino donante proditi iam tunc et uicti sunt. Unde uolens Agatho papa, sicut in aliis prouinciis, ita etiam in Brittania qualis esset status ecclesiae, quam ab hereticorum contagiis castus, ediscere, hoc negotium reuerentissimo abbati Iohanni Britanniam destinato iniunxit. Quamobrem collecta pro hoc in Brittania synodo, quam diximus. inuenta est in omnibus fides inuiolata catholica; datumque illi exemplar eius Romam perferendum.

Uerum ille patriam reuertens, non multo postquam oceanum transiit, arreptus infirmitate ac defunctus est; corpusque eius ab amicis propter amorem sancti Martini, cuius monasterio praeerat, Turonis delatum atque honorifice sepultum est. Nam et benigno ecclesiae illius hospitio, cum Britanniam iret, exceptus est, rogatusque multum a fratribus, ut Romam reuertens, illo itinere ueniret, atque ad eam diuerteret ecclesiam; denique ibidem adiutores itineris et iniuncti operis accepit. Qui etsi in itinere defunctus est, nihilominus exemplum catholicae fidei Anglorum Romam perlatum est, atque ab apostolico papa omnibusque, qui audiere uel legere, gratantissime susceptum.

[19] Accepit autem rex Ecgfrid coniugem nomine Aedilthrydam, filiam Anna regis Orientalium Anglorum, cuius sepius mentionem fecimus, uiri bene religiosi, ac per omnia mente et opere egregii; quam et alter ante illum uir habuerat uxorem, princeps uidelicet Australium Gyruiorum uocabulo Tondberct. Sed illo post modicum temporis, ex quo eam accepit, defuncto, data est regi praefato; cuius consortio cum XII annis uteretur, perpetua tamen mansit uirginitatis integritate gloriosa; sicut mihimet sciscitanti, cum hoc, an ita esset, quibusdam uenisset in dubium, beatae memoriae Uilfrid episcopus referebat, dicens se testem integritatis eius esse certissimum; adeo ut Ecgfridus promiserit se ei terras ac pecunias multas esse donaturum, si reginae posset persuadere eius uti conubio, quia sciebat illam nullum uirorum plus illo diligere. Nec diffidendum est nostra etiam aetate fieri potuisse, quod aevo praecedente aliquoties factum fideles historiae narrant; donante uno eodemque Domino, qui se nobiscum usque in finem saeculi manere pollicetur. Nam etiam signum diuini miraculi, quo eiusdem feminae sepulta caro corrumpi non

potuit, indicio est, quia uirili contactu incorrupta durauerit.

Quae multum diu regem postulans, ut saeculi curas relinquere, atque in monasterio, tantum uero regi Christo seruire permetteretur; ubi uix aliquando inpetrauit, intrauit monasterium Aebba abbatissae, quae erat amita regis Ecgfridi, positum in loco, quem Coludi urbem nominant, accepto uelamine sanctimonialis habitus a praefato antistite Uilfrido. Post annum uero ipsa facta est abbatissa in regione, quae uocatur Elge; ubi constructo monasterio uirginum Deo deuotarum perplurium mater uirgo, et exemplis uitae caelestis esse coepit et monitis. De qua ferunt, quia, ex quo monasterium petiit, numquam lineis, sed solum laneis uestimentis uti uoluerit; raroque in calidis balneis, praeter imminentibus sollempniis maioribus, uerbi gratia paschae, pentecostes, epifaniae, lauari uoluerit; et tunc nouissima omnium, lotis prius suo suarumque ministrarum obsequio ceteris, quae ibi essent, famulis Christi; raro praeter maiora sollempnia, uel artiore necessitatem, plus quam semel per diem manducauerit; semper, si non infirmitas grauior prohibuisset, ex tempore matutinae synaxeos, usque ad ortum diei, in ecclesia precibus intenta persteterit. Sunt etiam, qui dicant, quia per prophetiae spiritum, et pestilentiam, qua ipsa esset moritura, praedixerit, et numerum quoque eorum, qui de suo monasterio hac essent de mundo rapiendi, palam cunctis praesentibus intimauerit.

Rapta est autem ad Dominum in medio suorum, post annos VII, ex quo abbatissae gradum susceperat; et aequae, ut ipsa iusserat, non alibi quam in medio eorum, iuxta ordinem, quo transierat, ligneo in locello sepulta.

Cui successit in ministerium abbatissae soror eius Sexburg, quam habuerat in coniugem Earconberct rex Cantuariorum. Et cum sedecim annis esset sepulta, placuit eidem abbatissae leuari ossa eius, et in locello nouo posita in ecclesiam transferri; iussitque quosdam e fratribus quaerere lapidem, de quo locellum in hoc facere possent;

qui ascensa naui, ipsa enim regio Elge undique est aquis ac paludibus circumdata, neque lapides maiores habet, uenerunt ad ciuitatulam quandam desolatam, non procul inde sitam, quae lingua Anglorum Grantacaestir uocatur; et mox inuenerunt iuxta muros ciuitatis locellum de marmore albo pulcherrime factum, operculo quoque similis lapidis aptissime tectum. Unde intellegentes a Domino suum iter esse prosperatum, gratias agentes rettulerunt ad monasterium.

Cumque corpus sacrae uirginis ac sponsae Christi aperto sepulchro esset prolatum in lucem, ita incorruptum inuentum est, ac si eodem die fuisset defuncta, siue humo condita; sicut et praefatus antistes Uilfrid, et multi alii, qui nouere, testantur; sed certiori notitia medicus Cynifrid, qui et morienti illi, et eleuatae de tumulo adfuit; qui referre erat solitus, quod illa infirmata habuerit tumorem maximum sub maxilla; 'Iusseruntque me,' inquit, 'incidere tumorem illum, ut efflueret noxius umor, qui inerat; quod dum facerem, uidebatur illa per biduum aliquanto leuius habere; ita ut multi putarent, quia sanari posset a langore. Tertia autem die prioribus adgrauata doloribus, et

rapta confestim de mundo, dolorem omnem ac mortem perpetua salute ac uita mutauit. Cumque post tot annos eleuanda essent ossa de sepulchro, et extento desuper papilione, omnis congregatio, hinc fratrum, inde sororum, psallens circumstaret; ipsa autem abbatissa intus cum paucis ossa elatura et dilutura intrasset, repente audiuius abbatissam intus uoce clara proclamare: “Sit gloria nomini Domini.” Nec multo post clamauerunt me intus, reserato ostio papilionis; uidique eleuatum de tumulo, et positum in lectulo corpus sacrae Deo uirginis quasi dormientis simile. Sed et discooperto uultus indumento, monstrauerunt mihi etiam uulnus incisurae, quod feceram, curatum; ita ut mirum in modum pro aperto et hiante uulnere, cum quo sepulta erat, tenuissima tunc cicatricis uestigia parerent. Sed et linteamina omnia, quibus inuolutum erat corpus, integra apparuerunt, et ita noua, ut ipso die uiderentur castis eius membris esse circumdata.’ Ferunt autem, quia, cum praefato tumore ac dolore maxillae siue colli premeretur, multum delectata sit hoc genere infirmitatis, ac solita dicere: ‘Scio certissime, quia merito in collo pondus langoris porto, in quo iuuenulam me memini superuacua moniliorum pondera portare; et credo, quod ideo me superna pietas dolore colli uoluit grauari, ut sic absoluar reatu superuacuae leuitatis; dum mihi nunc pro auro et margaritis, de collo rubor tumoris ardorque promineat.’ Contigit autem tactu indumentorum eorundem et daemonia ab obsessis effugata corporibus, et infirmitates alias aliquoties esse curatas. Sed et loculum, in quo primo sepulta est, nonnullis oculos dolentibus saluti fuisse perhibent; qui cum suum caput eidem loculo adponentes orassent, mox doloris siue caliginis incommodum ab oculis amouerent.

Lauerunt igitur uirgines corpus, et nouis indutum uestibus intulerunt in ecclesiam, atque in eo, quod adlatum erat, sarcophago posuerunt, ubi usque hodie in magna ueneratione habetur. Mirum uero in modum ita aptum corpori uirginis sarcophagum inuentum est, ac si ei specialiter praeparatum fuisset; et locus quoque capitis seorsum fabrefactus ad mensuram capitis illius aptissime figuratus apparuit.

Est autem Elge in prouincia Orientalium Anglorum regio familiarum circiter sexcentarum, in similitudinem insulae uel paludibus, ut diximus, circumdata uel aquis; unde et a copia anguillarum, quae in eisdem paludibus capiuntur, nomen accepit; ubi monasterium habere desiderauit memorata Christi famula, quoniam de prouincia eorundem Orientalium Anglorum ipsa, ut praefati sumus, carnis originem duxerat.

[20] Uidetur opportunum huic historiae etiam hymnum uirginitatis inserere, quem ante annos plurimos in laudem ac praeconium eiusdem reginae ac sponsae Christi, et ideo ueraciter reginae, quia sponsae Christi, elegiaco metro composuimus; et imitari morem sacrae scripturae, cuius historiae carmina plurima indita, et haec metro ac uersibus constat esse composita.

Alma Deus Trinitas, quae saecula cuncta gubernas, Adnue iam coeptis, alma Deus Trinitas.

Bella Maro resonet, nos pacis dona canamus; Munera nos Christi, bella

Maro resonet.

Carmina casta mihi, fedae non raptus Helenae; Luxus erit lubricis, carmina casta mihi.

Dona superna loquar, miserae non proelia Troiae; Terra quibus gaudet, dona superna loquar.

En Deus altus adit uenerandae uirginis aluum, Liberet ut homines, en Deus altus adit.

Femina uirgo parit mundi deuota parentem, Porta Maria Dei, femina uirgo parit.

Gaudet amica cohors de uirgine matre tonantis; Uirginitate micans gaudet amica cohors.

Huius honor genuit casto de germine plures, Uirgineos flores huius honor genuit.

Ignibus usta feris, uirgo non cessit Agathe, Eulalia et perfert, ignibus usta feris.

Kasta feras superat mentis pro culmine Tecla, Eufemia sacras kasta feras superat.

Laeta ridet gladios ferro robustior Agnes, Caecilia infestos laeta ridet gladios.

Multus in orbe uiget per sobria corda triumphus, Sobrietatis amor multus in orbe uiget.

Nostra quoque egregia iam tempora uirgo beaut; Aedilthryda nitet nostra quoque egregia.

Orta patre eximio, regali et stemmate clara, Nobilior Domino est, orta patre eximio.

Percipit inde decus reginae, et scepra sub astris, Plus super astra manens, percipit inde decus.

Quid petis, alma, uirum, sponso iam dedita summo? Sponsus adest Christus; quid petis, alma, uirum?

Regis ut aetherei matrem iam credo sequaris, Tu quoque sis mater regis ut aetherei.

Sponsa dicata Deo bis sex regnauerat annis, Inque monasterio est sponsa dicata Deo.

Tota sacrata polo celsis ubi floruit actis, Reddidit atque animam tota sacrata polo.

Uirginis alma caro est tumultata bis octo Nouembres, Nec putet in tumultu uirginis alma caro.

Xriste, tui est operis, quia uestis et ipsa sepulchro Inuiolata nitet: Xriste, tui est operis.

Ydros et ater abit sacrae pro uestis honore, Morbi diffugiunt, ydros et ater abit.

Zelus in hoste furit, quondam qui uicerat Euam; Uirgo triumphat ouans, zelus in hoste furit.

Aspice, nupta Deo, quae sit tibi gloria terris; Quae maneat caelis, aspice,

nupta Deo.

Munera laeta capis, festiuis fulgida taedis, Ecce uenit sponsus, munera laeta capis.

Et noua dulcisono modularis carmina plectro, Sponsa hymno exultas et noua dulcisono.

Nullus ab altithroni comitatu segregat agni, Quam affectu tulerat nullus ab altithroni.

[21] Anno regni Ecgfridi nono, conserto graui proelio inter ipsum et Aedilredum regem Merciorum iuxta fluuium Treanta, occisus est Aelfuini frater regis Ecgfridi, iuuenis circiter X et VIII annorum, utrique prouinciae multum amabilis. Nam et sororem eius, quae dicebatur Osthryd, rex Aedilred habebat uxorem. Cumque materies belli acrioris et inimicitiae longioris inter reges populosque feroces uideretur exorta, Theodorus Deo dilectus antistes, diuino functus auxilio, salutifera exhortatione coeptum tanti periculi funditus extinguit incendium; adeo ut, pacatis alterutrum regibus ac populis, nullius anima hominis pro interfecto regis fratre, sed debita solummodo multa pecuniae regi ultori daretur. Cuius foedera pacis multo exinde tempore inter eosdem reges eorumque regna durarunt.

[22] In praefato autem proelio, quo occisus est rex Aelfuini, memorabile quiddam factum esse constat, quod nequaquam silentio praetereundum arbitror, sed multorum saluti, si referatur, fore proficuum. Occisus est ibi inter alios de militia eius iuuenis, uocabulo Imma; qui cum die illo et nocte sequenti inter cadauera occisorum similis mortuo iaceret, tandem recepto spiritu reuixit, ac residens, sua uulnera, prout potuit, ipse alligauit; dein modicum requietus, leuauit se, et coepit abire, sicubi amicos, qui sui curam agerent, posset inuenire. Quod dum faceret, inuentus est, et captus a uiris hostilis exercitus, et ad dominum ipsorum, comitem uidelicet Aedilredi regis, adductus. A quo interrogatus, qui esset, timuit se militem fuisse confiteri; rusticum se potius et pauperem, atque uxoreo uinculo conligatum fuisse respondit; et propter uictum militibus adferendum in expeditionem se cum sui similibus uenisse testatus est. At ille suscipiens eum, curam uulneribus egit; et ubi sanescere coepit, noctu eum, ne aufugeret, uinciri praecepit. Nec tamen uinciri potuit; nam mox, ut abiire, qui uinxerant, eadem eius sunt uincula soluta.

Habebat enim germanum fratrem, cui nomen erat Tunna, presbyterum et abbatem monasterii in ciuitate, quae hactenus ab eius nomine Tunnacaestir cognominatur; qui cum eum in pugna peremtum audiret, uenit quaerere, si forte corpus eius inuenire posset, inuentumque alium illi per omnia simillimum, putauit ipsum esse; quem ad monasterium suum deferens, honorifice sepeliuit, et pro absolutione animae eius sepius missas facere curauit. Quarum celebratione factum est, quod dixi, ut nullus eum posset uincire, quin continuo solueretur. Interea comes, qui eum tenebat, mirari et interrogare coepit, quare ligari non posset, an forte litteras solutorias, de qualibus fabulae ferunt, apud se haberet, propter quas ligari non posset. At ille

respondit nil se talium artium nosse; ‘Sed habeo fratrem,’ inquit, ‘presbyterum in mea prouincia, et scio, quia ille me interfectum putans pro me missas crebras facit; et si nunc in alia uita essem, ibi anima mea per intercessionem eius solueretur a poenis.’ Dumque aliquanto tempore apud comitem teneretur, animaduerterunt, qui eum diligentius considerabant, ex uultu et habitu et sermonibus eius, quia non erat de paupere uulgo, ut dixerat, sed de nobilibus. Tunc secreto aduocans eum comes, interrogauit eum intentius, unde esset, promittens se nil ei mali facturum pro eo, si simpliciter sibi, quis fuisset, proderet. Quod dum ille faceret, ministrum se regis fuisse manifestans, respondit: ‘Et ego per singula tua responsa cognoueram, quia rusticus non eras, et nunc dignus quidem es morte, quia omnes fratres et cognati mei in illa sunt pugna interemti; nec te tamen occidam, ne fidem mei promissi praeuaricer.’

Ut ergo conualuit, uendidit eum Lundoniam Freso cuidam; sed nec ab illo, nec cum illuc duceretur, ullatinus potuit alligari. Uerum cum alia atque alia uinculorum ei genera hostes inponerent, cumque uidisset, qui emerat, uinculis eum non potuisse cohiberi, donauit ei facultatem sese redimendi, si posset. A tertia autem hora, quando missae fieri solebant, sepiissime uincula soluebantur. At ille dato iure iurando, ut rediret, uel pecuniam illi pro se mitteret, uenit Cantiam ad regem Hlotheri, qui erat filius sororis Aedilthydae reginae, de qua supra dictum est, quia et ipse quondam eiusdem reginae minister fuerat; petiitque et accepit ab eo pretium suae redemptionis, ac suo domino pro se, ut promiserat, misit.

Qui post haec patriam reuersus, atque ad suum fratrem perueniens, replicauit ex ordine cuncta, quae sibi aduersa, quaeue in aduersis solacia prouenissent; cognouitque, referente eo, illis maxime temporibus sua fuisse uincula soluta, quibus pro se missarum fuerant celebrata sollemnia. Sed et alia, quae periclitanti ei commoda contigissent et prospera, per intercessionem fraternam, et oblationem hostiae salutaris caelitus sibi fuisse donata intellexit.

Multique haec a praefato uiro audientes, accensi sunt in fide ac deuotione pietatis ad orandum, uel ad elimosynas faciendas, uel ad offerendas Deo uictimae sacrae oblationis, pro ereptione suorum, qui de saeculo migrauerant; intellexerunt enim, quia sacrificium salutare ad redemptionem ualeret et animae et corporis sempiternam.

Hanc mihi historiam etiam quidam eorum, qui ab ipso uiro, in quo facta est, audire, narrarunt; unde eam, quia liquido conperi, indubitanter historiae nostrae ecclesiasticae inserendam credidi.

[23] Anno post hunc sequente, hoc est anno dominicae incarnationis DCLXXX, religiosissima Christi famula Hild, abbatissa monasterii, quod dicitur Strenaeshalc, ut supra rettulimus, post multa, quae fecit in terris, opera caelestia, ad percipienda praemia vitae caelestis de terris ablata transiit die XV. Kalendarum Decembrium, cum esset annorum LXVI; quibus aequa partione diuisis, XXXIII primos in saeculari habitu nobilissime conversata conplevit, et totidem sequentes nobilius in monachica vita Domino

consecravit. Nam et nobilis natus erat, hoc est filia nepotis Edwini regis, vocabulo Hererici; cum quo etiam rege, ad praedicationem beatae memoriae Paulini primi Nordanhymbrorum episcopi, fidem et sacramenta Christi suscepit, atque haec, usquedum ad eius visionem pervenire meruit, intemerata servavit.

Quae cum, relicto habitu saeculari, illi soli seruire decreuisset, secessit ad prouinciam Orientalium Anglorum, erat namque propinqua regis illius, desiderans exinde, siquo modo posset, derelicta patria et omnibus, quaecumque habuerat, Galliam peruenire, atque in monasterio Cale peregrinam pro Domino uitam ducere, quo facilius perpetuam in caelis patriam posset mereri. Nam et in eodem monasterio soror ipsius Heresuid, mater Alduulfi regis Orientalium Anglorum, regularibus subdita disciplinis, ipso tempore coronam expectabat aeternam; cuius aemulata exemplum, et ipsa proposito peregrinandi annum totum in praefata prouincia retenta est; deinde ab Aidano episcopo patriam reuocata accepit locum unius familiae ad septentrionalem plagam Uiuri fluminis, ubi aequo anno uno monachicam cum perpaucis sociis uitam agebat.

Post haec facta est abbatissa in monasterio, quod uocatur Heruteu;

quod uidelicet monasterium factum erat non multo ante a religiosa Christi famula Heiu, quae prima feminarum fertur in prouincia Nordanhymbrorum propositum uestemque sanctimonialis habitus, consecrante Aidano episcopo, suscepisse. Sed illa post non multum tempus facti monasterii secessit ad ciuitatem Calcariam, quae a gente Anglorum Kalcacaestir appellatur, ibique sibi mansionem instituit. Praelata autem regimini monasterii illius famula Christi Hild, mox hoc regulari uita per omnia, prout a doctis uiris discere poterat, ordinare curabat; nam et episcopus Aidan, et quique nouerant eam religiosi, pro insita ei sapientia et amore diuini famulatus, sedulo eam uisitare, obnixè amare, diligenter erudire solebant.

Cum ergo aliquot annos huic monasterio regularis uitae institutioni multum intenta praeesset, contigit eam suscipere etiam construendum siue ordinandum monasterium in loco, qui uocatur Streaneshalch, quod opus sibi iniunctum non segniter inpleuit. Nam eisdem, quibus prius monasterium, etiam hoc disciplinis uitae regularis instituit; et quidem multam ibi quoque iustitiae, pietatis, et castimoniae, ceterarumque uirtutum, sed maxime pacis et caritatis custodiam docuit; ita ut in exemplum primitivae ecclesiae nullus ibi diues, nullus esset egens, omnibus essent omnia communia, cum nihil cuiusquam esse uideretur proprium. Tantaque erat ipsa prudentiae, ut non solum mediocres quique in necessitatibus suis, sed etiam reges ac principes nonnumquam ab ea consilium quaererent, et inuenirent. Tantum lectioni diuinarum scripturarum suos uacare subditos, tantum operibus iustitiae se exercere faciebat, ut facillime uiderentur ibidem, qui ecclesiasticum gradum, hoc est altaris officium, apte subirent, plurimi posse repperiri.

Denique V ex eodem monasterio postea episcopos uidimus, et hos omnes singularis meriti ac sanctitatis uiros, quorum haec sunt nomina, Bosa, Aetla,

Offtor, Iohannes, et Uilfrid. De primo supra diximus, quod Eboraci fuerit consecratus antistes; de secundo breuiter intimandum, quod in episcopatum Dorciccaestra fuerit ordinatus; de ultimis infra dicendum est, quod eorum primus Hagustaldensis, secundus Eboracensis ecclesiae sit ordinatus episcopus. De medio nunc dicamus, quia, cum in utroque Hildae abbatissae monasterio lectioni et obseruationi scripturarum operam dedisset, tandem perfectiora desiderans, uenit Cantiam ad archiepiscopum beatae recordationis Theodorum; ubi postquam aliquandiu lectionibus sacris uacauit, etiam Romam adire curauit, quod eo tempore magnae uirtutis aestimabatur; et inde cum rediens Brittaniam adisset, diuertit ad prouinciam Huicciorum, cui tunc rex Osric praefuit; ibique uerbum fidei praedicans, simul et exemplum uiuendi sese uidentibus atque audientibus exhibens, multo tempore mansit. Quo tempore antistes prouinciae illius, uocabulo Bosel, tanta erat corporis infirmitate depressus, ut officium episcopatus per se inplere non posset;

propter quod omnium iudicio praefatus uir in episcopatum pro eo electus, ac iubente Aedilredo rege per Uilfridum beatae memoriae antistitem, qui tunc temporis Mediterraneorum Anglorum episcopatum gerebat, ordinatus est; pro eo, quod archiepiscopus Theodorus iam defunctus erat, et necdum alius pro eo ordinatus episcopus. In quam uidelicet prouinciam paulo ante, hoc est ante praefatum uirum Dei Boselum, uir strenuissimus ac doctissimus atque excellentis ingenii uocabulo Tatfrid, de eiusdem abbatissae monasterio electus est antistes; sed, priusquam ordinari posset, morte inmaturo praereptus est.

Non solum ergo praefata Christi ancilla et abbatissa Hild, quam omnes, qui nouerant, ob insigne pietatis et gratiae matrem uocare consueuerant, in suo monasterio uitae exemplo praesentibus extitit;

sed etiam plurimis longe manentibus, ad quos felix industriae ac uirtutis eius rumor peruenit, occasionem salutis et correctionis ministrauit. Oportebat namque inpleri somnium, quod mater eius Bregusuid in infantia eius uidit. Quae cum uir eius Hereric exularet sub rege Brettonum Cerdice, ubi et ueneno periit, uidit per somnium, quasi subito sublatum eum quaesierit cum omni diligentia, nullumque eius uspiam uestigium apparuerit. Uerum cum solertissime illum quaesierit, extemplo se repperire sub ueste sua monile pretiosissimum; quod, dum attentius consideraret, tantifulgore luminis refulgere uidebatur, ut omnes Britanniae fines illius gratia splendoris inpleret. Quod nimirum somnium ueraciter in filia eius, de qua loquimur, expletum est; cuius uita non sibi solummodo, sed multis bene uiuere uolentibus exempla operum lucis praebuit.

Uerum illa cum multis annis huic monasterio praeesset, placuit pio prouisori salutis nostrae sanctam eius animam longa etiam infirmitate carnis examinari, ut, iuxta exemplum apostoli, uirtus eius in infirmitate perficeretur. Percussa etenim febribus acri coepit ardore fatigari, et per sex continuos annos eadem molestia laborare non cessabat; in quo toto tempore numquam ipsa uel conditori suo gratias agere, uel commissum sibi gregem et puplice et priuatim docere praetermittebat. Nam suo praedocta exemplo, monebat omnes et in

salute accepta corporis Domino obtemperanter seruendum, et in aduersis rerum siue infirmitatibus membrorum fideliter Domino esse gratias semper agendas. VIIo ergo suae infirmitatis anno, conuerso ad interanea dolore, ad diem peruenit ultimum, et circa galli cantum, percepto uiatico sacrosanctae communionis, cum arcessitis ancillis Christi, quae erant in eodem monasterio, de seruanda eas inuicem, immo cum omnibus pace euangelica ammoneret;

inter uerba exhortationis laeta mortem uidit, immo, ut uerbis Domini loquar, de morte transiuit ad uitam.

Qua uidelicet nocte Dominus omnipotens obitum ipsius in alio longius posito monasterio, quod ipsa eodem anno construxerat, et appellatur Hacanós, manifesta uisione reuelare dignatus est. Erat in ipso monasterio quaedam sanctimonialis femina, nomine Begu, quae XXX et amplius annos dedicata Domino uirginitate, in monachica conuersatione seruiebat. Haec tunc in dormitorio sororum pausans, audiuit subito in aere notum campanae sonum, quo ad orationes excitari uel conuocari solebant, cum quis eorum de saeculo fuisset euocatus; apertisque, ut sibi uidebatur, oculis, aspexit, detecto domus culmine, fusam desuper lucem omnia repleuisse; cui uidelicet luci dum sollicita intenderet, uidit animam praefatae Dei famulae in ipsa luce, comitantibus ac ducentibus angelis, ad caelum ferri.

Cumque somno excussa uideret ceteras pausantes circa se sorores, intellexit uel in somnio, uel in uisione mentis ostensum sibi esse, quod uiderat. Statimque exurgens, nimio timore perterrita, cucurrit ad uirginem, quae tunc monasterio abbatissae uice praefuit, cui nomen erat Frigyd, fletuque ac lacrimis multum perfusa, ac suspiria longa trahens, nuntiauit matrem illarum omnium Hild abbatissam iam migrasse de saeculo, et se aspectante cum luce inmensa, ducibus angelis, ad aeternae limina lucis et supernorum consortia ciuium ascendisse. Quod cum illa audisset, suscitauit cunctas sorores, et in ecclesiam conuocatas orationibus ac psalmis pro anima matris operam dare monuit. Quod cum residuo noctis tempore diligenter agerent, uenerunt primo diluculo fratres, qui eius obitum nuntiarent, a loco, ubi defuncta est. At illae respondentes dixerunt se prius eadem cognouisse; et, cum exponerent per ordinem, quomodo haec uel quando didicissent, inuentum est, eadem hora transitum eius illis ostensum esse per uisionem, qua illam referebant exisse de mundo. Pulchraque rerum concordia procuratum est diuinitus, ut, cum illi exitum eius de hac uita uiderent, tunc isti introitum eius in perpetuam animarum uitam cognoscerent. Distant autem inter se monasteria haec XIII ferme milibus passuum.

Ferunt autem, quod eadem nocte, in ipso quoque monasterio, ubi praefata Dei famula obiit, cuidam uirginum Deo deuotarum, quae illam inmenso amore diligebat, obitus illius in uisione apparuerit, quae animam eius cum angelis ad caelum ire conspexerit, atque hoc ipsa, qua factum est, hora his, quae secum erant, famulis Christi manifeste narrauerit, easque ad orandum pro anima eius, etiam priusquam cetera congregatio eius obitum cognouisset, excitauerit.

Quod ita fuisse factum mox congregationi mane facto innotuit. Erat enim

haec ipsa hora cum aliis nonnullis Christi ancillis in extremis monasterii locis seorsum posita, ubi nuper uenientes ad conuersationem feminae solebant probari, donec regulariter institutae in societatem congregationis susciperentur.

[24] In huius monasterio abbatissae fuit frater quidam diuina gratia specialiter insignis, quia carmina religioni et pietati apta facere solebat; ita ut, quicquid ex diuinis litteris per interpretes disceret, hoc ipse post pusillum uerbis poeticis maxima suauitate et conpunctione compositis, in sua, id est Anglorum, lingua proferret.

Cuius carminibus multorum saepe animi ad contemptum saeculi, et appetitum sunt uitae caelestis accensi. Et quidem et alii post illum in gente Anglorum religiosa poemata facere temtabant; sed nullus eum aequiparare potuit. Namque ipse non ab hominibus, neque per hominem institutus, canendi artem didicit, sed diuinitus adiutus gratis canendi donum accepit. Unde nil umquam friuoli et superuacui poematis facere potuit, sed ea tantummodo, quae ad religionem pertinent, religiosam eius linguam decebant. Siquidem in habitu saeculari usque ad tempora prouectoris aetatis constitutus, nil carminum aliquando didicerat. Unde nonnumquam in conuiuio, cum esset laetitiae causa decretum, ut omnes per ordinem cantare deberent, ille, ubi adpropinquare sibi citharam cernebat, surgebat a media caena, et egressus ad suam domum repedabat.

Quod dum tempore quodam faceret, et relictā domū conuiuii egressus esset ad stabula iumentorum, quorum ei custodia nocte illa erat delegata, ibique hora conpetenti membra dedisset sopori, adstitit ei quidam per somnium, eumque salutans, ac suo appellans nomine: ‘Caedmon,’ inquit, ‘canta mihi aliquid.’ At ille respondens: ‘Nescio,’ inquit, ‘cantare; nam et ideo de conuiuio egressus huc secessi, quia cantare non poteram.’ Rursum ille, qui cum eo loquebatur, ‘Attamen,’ ait, ‘mihi cantare habes.’ ‘Quid,’

inquit, ‘debeo cantare?’ Et ille, ‘Canta,’ inquit, ‘principium creaturarum.’ Quo accepto responso, statim ipse coepit cantare in laudem Dei conditoris uersus, quos numquam audierat, quorum iste est sensus: ‘Nunc laudare debemus auctorem regni caelestis, potentiam Creatoris et consilium illius, facta Patris gloriae. Quomodo ille, cum sit aeternus Deus, omnium miraculorum auctor extitit, qui primo filiis hominum caelum pro culmine tecti, dehinc terram custos humani generis omnipotens creauit.’ Hic est sensus, non autem ordo ipse uerborum, quae dormiens ille canebat; neque enim possunt carmina, quamuis optime composita, ex alia in aliam linguam ad uerbum sine detrimento sui decoris ac dignitatis transferri. Exsurgens autem a somno, cuncta, quae dormiens cantauerat, memoriter retinuit, et eis mox plura in eundem modum uerba Deo digni carminis adiunxit.

Ueniensque mane ad uilicū, qui sibi praeerat, quid doni percepisset, indicauit, atque ad abbatissam perductus, iussus est, multis doctioribus uiris praesentibus, indicare somnium, et dicere carmen, ut uniuersorum iudicio, quid uel unde esset, quod referebat, probaretur. Uisumque est omnibus caelestem ei

a Domino concessam esse gratiam. Exponebantque illi quendam sacrae historiae siue doctrinae sermonem, praecipientes eum, si posset, hunc in modulationem carminis transferre. At ille suscepto negotio abiit, et mane rediens, optimo carmine, quod iuebatur, compositum reddidit.

Unde mox abbatissa amplexata gratiam Dei in uiro, saecularem illum habitum relinquere, et monachicum suscipere propositum docuit, susceptumque in monasterium cum omnibus suis fratrum cohorti adsociauit, iussitque illum seriem sacrae historiae doceri. At ipse cuncta, quae audiendo discere poterat, rememorando secum, et quasi mundum animal ruminando, in carmen dulcissimum conuertebat, suauiusque resonando doctores suos uicissim auditores sui faciebat.

Canebat autem de creatione mundi, et origine humani generis, et tota genesis historia, de egressu Israel ex Aegypto, et ingressu in terram repromissionis, de aliis plurimis sacrae scripturae historiis, de incarnatione dominica, passione, resurrectione, et ascensione in caelum, de Spiritus Sancti aduentu, et apostolorum doctrina. Item de terrore futuri iudicii, et horrore poenae gehennalis, ac dulcedine regni caelestis multa carmina faciebat; sed et alia perplura de beneficiis et iudiciis diuinis, in quibus cunctis homines ab amore scelerum abstrahere, ad dilectionem uero et solertiam bonae actionis excitare curabat. Erat enim uir multum religiosus, et regularibus disciplinis humiliter subditus; aduersum uero illos, qui aliter facere uolebant, zelo magni feruoris accensus; unde et pulchro uitam suam fine conclusit.

Nam propinquantem hora sui decessus, XIII diebus praeueniente corporea infirmitate pressus est, adeo tamen moderate, ut et loqui toto eo tempore posset, et ingredi. Erat autem in proximo casa, in qua infirmiores et qui prope morituri esse uidebantur, induci solebant. Rogauit ergo ministrum suum uespere incumbente, nocte qua de saeculo erat exiturus, ut in ea sibi locum quiescendi praepararet; qui miratus, cur hoc rogaret, qui nequaquam adhuc moriturus esse uidebatur, fecit tamen, quod dixerat. Cumque ibidem positi uicissim aliqua gaudente animo, una cum eis, qui ibidem ante inerant, loquerentur ac iocarentur, et iam mediae noctis tempus esset transcensum, interrogauit, si eucharistiam intus haberent.

Respondebant: 'Quid opus est eucharistia? neque enim mori adhuc habes, qui tam hilariter nobiscum uelut sospes loqueris.' Rursus ille: 'Et tamen,' ait, 'afferte mihi eucharistiam.' Qua accepta in manu, interrogauit, si omnes placidum erga se animum, et sine querela controuersiae ac rancoris haberent. Respondebant omnes placidissimam se mentem ad illum, et ab omni ira remotam habere, eumque uicissim rogabant placidam erga ipsos mentem habere. Qui confestim respondit: 'Placidam ego mentem, filioli, erga omnes Dei famulos gero.' Sicque se caelesti muniens uiatico, uitae alterius ingressui parauit; et interrogauit, quam prope esset hora, qua fratres ad dicendas Domino laudes nocturnas excitari deberent.

Respondebant: 'Non longe est.' At ille: 'Bene, ergo exspectemus horam illam.' Et signans se signo sanctae crucis reclinauit caput ad ceruicem,

modicumque obdormiens ita cum silentio uitam finiuit.

Sicque factum est, ut, quomodo simplici ac pura mente tranquillaque deuotione Domino seruiert, ita etiam tranquilla morte mundum relinquens ad eius uisionem ueniret, illaque lingua, quae tot salutaria uerba in laudem Conditoris conposuerat, ultima quoque uerba in laudem ipsius, signando sese, et spiritum suum in manus eius commendando clauderet; qui etiam praescius sui obitus extitisse ex his, quae narrauimus, uidetur.

[25] His temporibus monasterium uirginum, quod Coludi Urbem cognominant, cuius et supra meminimus, per culpam incuriae flammis absumtum est. Quod tamen a malitia inhabitantium in eo, et praecipue illorum, qui maiores esse uidebantur, contigisse, omnes, qui nouere, facillime potuerunt aduertere. Sed non defuit puniendis admonitio diuinae pietatis, qua correcti per ieiunia, fletus, et preces iram a se, instar Nineuitarum, iusti Iudicis auerterent.

Erat namque in eodem monasterio uir de genere Scottorum, Adamnanus uocabulo, ducens uitam in continentia et orationibus multum Deo deuotam, ita ut nil umquam cibi uel potus, excepta die dominica et quinta sabbati, perciperet, saepe autem noctes integras peruigil in oratione transigeret. Quae quidem illi districtio uitae artioris, primo ex necessitate emendandae suae prauitatis obuenerat, sed procedente tempore necessitatem in consuetudinem uerterat.

Siquidem in adolescentia sua sceleris aliquid commiserat, quod commissum, ubi ad cor suum rediit, grauissime exhorruit, et se pro illo puniendum a districto Iudice timebat. Accedens ergo ad sacerdotem, a quo sibi sperabat iter salutis posse demonstrari, confessus est reatum suum, petiitque, ut consilium sibi daret, quo posset fugere a uentura ira. Qui audito eius commisso dixit: ‘Grande uulnus grandioris curam medellae desiderat; et ideo ieiuniis, psalmis, et orationibus, quantum uales, insiste, quo praeoccupando faciem Domini in confessione propitium eum inuenire merearis.’ At ille, quem nimius reae conscientiae tenebat dolor, et internis peccatorum uinculis, quibus grauabatur, ocus desiderabat absolui: ‘Adulescentior,’ inquit, ‘sum aetate, et uegetus corpore; quicquid mihi inposueris agendum, dummodo saluus fiam in die Domini, totum facile feram, etiam si totam noctem stando in precibus peragere, si integram septimanam iubeas abstinendo transigere.’ Qui dixit: ‘Multum est, ut tota septimana absque alimento corporis perdures; sed biduanum uel triduanum sat est obseruare ieiunium. Hoc facito, donec post modicum tempus rediens ad te, quid facere debeas, et quamdiu paenitentiae insistere tibi plenius ostendam.’ Quibus dictis, et descripta illi mensura paenitendi, abiit sacerdos, et ingruente causa subita secessit Hiberniam, unde originem duxerat, neque ultra ad eum iuxta suum conductum rediit. At ipse memor praecepti eius, simul et promissi sui, totum se lacrimis paenitentiae, uigiliis sanctis, et continentiae mancipauit; ita ut quinta solum sabbati et dominica, sicut praedixi, reficeret, ceteris septimanae diebus ieiunus permaneret. Cumque sacerdotem suum Hiberniam

secessisse, ibique defunctum esse audisset, semper ex eo tempore, iuxta conductum eius memoratum, continentiae modum obseruabat; et, quod causa diuini timoris semel ob reatum compunctus coeperat, iam causa diuini amoris delectatus praemiis indefessus agebat.

Quod dum multo tempore sedulus exsequeretur, contigit, eum die quadam de monasterio illo longius egressum, comitante secum uno de fratribus, peracto itinere redire. Qui cum monasterio propinquarent, et aedificia illius sublimiter erecta aspicerent, solutus est in lacrimas uir Dei, et tristitiam cordis uultu indice prodebat. Quod intuens comes, quare faceret, inquisiuit. At ille: ‘Cuncta,’

inquit, ‘haec, quae cernis, aedificia publica uel priuata, in proximo est, ut ignis absumens in cinerem conuertat.’ Quod ille audiens, mox ut intrauerunt monasterium, matri congregationis, uocabulo AebbĀ, curauit indicare. At illa merito turbata de tali praesagio uocauit ad se uirum, et diligentius ab eo rem, uel unde hoc ipse nosset, inquirebat. Qui ait: ‘Nuper occupatus noctu uigiliis et psalmis, uidi adstantem mihi subito quendam incogniti uultus; cuius praesentia cum essem exterritus, dixit mihi, ne timerem; et quasi familiari me uoce alloquens, ‘Bene facis,’

inquit, ‘qui tempore isto nocturnae quietis non somno indulgere, sed uigiliis et orationibus insistere maluisti.’ At ego: ‘Noui,’

inquit, ‘multum mihi esse necesse uigiliis salutaribus insistere, et pro meis erratibus sedulo Dominum deprecari.’ Qui adiciens ‘Uerum,’

inquit, ‘dicis, quia et tibi et multis opus est peccata sua bonis operibus redimere, et, cum cessant a laboribus rerum temporalium, tunc pro appetitu aeternorum bonorum liberius laborare; sed hoc tamen paucissimi faciunt. Siquidem modo totum hoc monasterium ex ordine perlustrans, singulorum casas ac lectos inspexi, et neminem ex omnibus praeter te erga sanitatem animae suae occupatum repperi;

sed omnes prorsus, et uiri et feminae, aut somno torpent inertes, aut ad peccata uigilant. Nam et domunculae, quae ad orandum uel legendum factae erant, nunc in comessionum, potationum, fabulationum, et ceterarum sunt inlecebrarum cubilia conuersae, uirgines quoque Deo dicatae, contempta reuerentia suae professionis, quotiescumque uacant, texendis subtilioribus indumentis operam dant, quibus aut se ipsas ad uicem sponsarum in periculum sui status adornent, aut externorum sibi uirorum amicitiam comparent. Unde merito loco huic et habitatoribus eius grauis de caelo uindicta flammis saeuientibus praeparata est.’ Dixit autem abbatissa: ‘Et quare non citius hoc conpertum mihi reuelare uoluisti?’ Qui respondit: ‘Timui propter reuerentiam tuam, ne forte nimium conturbareris; et tamen hanc consolationem habeas, quod in diebus tuis haec plaga non superueniet.’ Qua diuulgata uisione, aliquantulum loci accolae paucis diebus timere, et se ipsos intermissis facinoribus castigare coeperunt. Uerum post obitum ipsius abbatissae redierunt ad pristinas sordes, immo sceleratiora fecerunt. Et cum dicerent, ‘Pax et securitas,’ extemplo praefatae ultionis sunt poena multati.

Quae mihi cuncta sic esse facta reuerentissimus meus conpresbyter Aedgils referebat, qui tunc in illo monasterio degebat. Postea autem, discedentibus inde ob desolationem plurimis incolarum, in nostro monasterio plurimo tempore conuersatus, ibidemque defunctus est. Haec ideo nostrae historiae inserenda credidimus, ut admoneremus lectorem operum Domini, quam terribilis in consiliis super filios hominum; ne forte nos tempore aliquo carnis inlecebris seruientes, minusque Dei iudicium formidantes, repentina eius ira corripiat, et uel temporalibus damnis iuste saeuens affligat, uel ad perpetuam perditionem districtius examinans tollat.

[26] Anno dominicae incarnationis DCLXXXIII. Ecgfrid rex Nordanhymbrorum, misso Hiberniam cum exercitu duce Bercto, uastauit misere gentem innoxiam, et nationi Anglorum semper amicissimam, ita ut ne ecclesiis quidem aut monasteriis manus parceret hostilis. At insulani et, quantum ualuere, armis arma repellebant, et inuocantes diuinae auxilium pietatis, caelitus se uindicari continuis diu inprecationibus postulabant. Et quamuis maledici regnum Dei possidere non possint, creditum est tamen, quod hi, qui merito impietatis suae maledicebantur, ocius Domino uindice poenas sui reatus luerent. Siquidem anno post hunc proximo idem rex, cum temere exercitum ad uastandam Pictorum prouinciam duxisset, multum prohibentibus amicis, et maxime beatae memoriae Cudbercto, qui nuper fuerat ordinatus episcopus, introductus est, simulantibus fugam hostibus, in angustias inaccessorum montium, et cum maxima parte copiarum, quas secum adduxerat, extinctus anno aetatis suae XL.,

regni autem XV., die XIII. Kalendarum Iuniarum. Et quidem, ut dixi, prohibuerunt amici, ne hoc bellum iniret; sed, quoniam anno praecedente noluerat audire reuerentissimum patrem Ecgerctum, ne Scottiam nil se ledentem impugnaret, datum est illi ex poena peccati illius, ne nunc eos, qui ipsum ab interitu reuocare cupiebant, audiret.

Ex quo tempore spes coepit et uirtus regni Anglorum ‘fluere ac retro sublapsa referri.’ Nam et Picti terram possessionis suae, quam tenuerunt Angli; et Scotti, qui erant in Brittaniam; Brettonum quoque pars nonnulla libertatem receperunt; quam et hactenus habent per annos circiter XLVI; ubi inter plurimos gentis Anglorum, uel interemtis gladio, uel seruitio addictos, uel de terra Pictorum fuga lapsos, etiam reuerentissimus uir Domini Trumuini, qui in eos episcopatum acceperat, recessit cum suis, qui erant in monasterio Aebbercurnig, posito quidem in regione Anglorum, sed in uicina freti, quod Anglorum terras Pictorumque disternat; eosque, ubicumque poterat, amicis per monasteria commendans, ipse in saepedicto famulorum famularumque Dei monasterio, quod uocatur StreanĀshalch, locum mansionis elegit; ibique cum paucis suorum in monachica districtione uitam non sibi solummodo, sed et multis utilem, plurimo annorum tempore duxit; ubi etiam defunctus, in ecclesia beati Petri apostoli iuxta honorem et uita et gradu eius condignum conditus est. Praeerat quidem tunc eidem monasterio regia uirgo Aelbfled, una cum matre Eanfleda, quarum supra fecimus mentionem. Sed, adueniente illuc

episcopo, maximum regendi auxilium, simul et suae uitae solacium deuota Deo doctrix inuenit. Successit autem Ecgfrido in regnum Aldfrid, uir in scripturis doctissimus, qui frater eius et filius Osuii regis esse dicebatur; destructumque regni statum, quamuis intra fines angustiores, nobiliter recuperauit.

Quo uidelicet anno, qui est ab incarnatione dominica DCLXXXV.,

Hlothari Cantuariorum rex, cum post Ecgbertum fratrem suum, qui VIII annis regnauerat, ipse XII annis regnasset, mortuus erat VIII.

Idus Februarias. Uulneratus namque est in pugna Australium Saxonum, quos contra eum Edric filius Ecgberti adgregarat, et inter medendum defunctus. Ac post eum idem Edric anno uno ac dimidio regnauit; quo defuncto, regnum illud aliquod temporis spatium reges dubii uel externi disperdiderunt; donec legitimus rex Uictred, id est filius Ecgberti, confortatus in regno, religione simul et industria gentem suam ab extranea inuasionem liberaret.

[27] Ipso etiam anno, quo finem uitae accepit rex Ecgfrid, episcopum, ut diximus, fecerat ordinari Lindisfarnensium ecclesiae uirum sanctum et uenerabilem Cudbertum, qui in insula permodica, quae appellatur Farne, et ab eadem ecclesia nouem ferme milibus passuum in Oceano procul abest, uitam solitariam per annos plures in magna corporis et mentis continentia duxerat. Qui quidem a prima aetate pueritiae studio religiosae uitae semper ardebat, sed ab ineunte adulescentia monachicum et nomen adsumsit, et habitum.

Intrauit autem primo monasterium Mailros, quod in ripa Tuidi fluminis positum tunc abbas Eata, uir omnium mansuetissimus ac simplicissimus, regebat, qui postea episcopus Hagustaldensis siue Lindisfarnensis ecclesiae factus est, ut supra memorauimus; cui tempore illo propositus Boisil magnarum uirtutum et prophetici spiritus sacerdos fuit. Huius discipulatus Cudbert humiliter subditus, et scientiam ab eo scripturarum, et bonorum operum sumsit exempla.

Qui postquam migravit ad Dominum, Cudbert eidem monasterio factus propositus, plures et auctoritate magistri, et exemplo suae actionis regularem instituebat ad uitam. Nec solum ipsi monasterio regularis uitae monita, simul et exempla praebebat, sed et uulgus circumpositum longe lateque a uita stultae consuetudinis ad caelestium gaudiorum conuertere curabat amorem. Nam et multi fidem, quam habebant, iniquis profanabant operibus; et aliqui etiam tempore mortalitatis, neglectis fidei sacramentis, quibus erant inbuti, ad erratica idolatriae medicamina concurrebant; quasi missam a Deo conditore plagam per incantationes uel fylacteria uel alia quaelibet daemonicae artis arcana cohibere ualerent. Ad utrorumque ergo corrigendum errorem, crebro ipse de monasterio egressus, aliquoties equo sedens, sed saepius pedes incedens, circumpositas ueniebat ad uillas, et uiam ueritatis praedicabat errantibus; quod ipsum etiam Boisil suo tempore facere consueuerat. Erat quippe moris eo tempore populis Anglorum, ut ueniente in uillam clerico uel

presbytero, cuncti ad eius imperium uerbum audituri confluerent; libenter ea, quae dicerentur, audirent; libentius, quae audire et intellegere poterant, operando sequerentur. Porro Cudbercto tanta erat dicendi peritia, tantus amor persuadendi, quae coeperat, tale uultus angelici lumen, ut nullus praesentium latebras ei sui cordis celare praesumeret; omnes palam, quae gesserant, confitendo proferrent, quia nimirum haec eadem illum latere nullo modo putabant; et confessa dignis, ut imperabat, poenitentiae fructibus abstergerent.

Solebat autem ea maxime loca peragraré, illis praedicare in uiculis, qui in arduis asperisque montibus procul positi aliis horrori erant ad uisendum, et paupertate pariter ac rusticitate sua doctorum arcebant accessum. Quos tamen ille pio libenter mancipatus labori, tanta doctrinae solertis excolebat industria, ut de monasterio egressus, saepe ebdomade integra, aliquando duabus uel tribus, nonnumquam etiam mense pleno domum non rediret; sed demoratus in montanis, plebem rusticam uerbo praedicationis simul et opere uirtutis ad caelestia uocaret.

Cum ergo uenerabilis Domini famulus multos in Mailronensi monasterio degens annos magnis uirtutum signis effulgeret, transtulit eum reuerentissimus abbas ipsius Eata ad insulam Lindisfarnensium, ut ibi quoque fratribus custodiam disciplinae regularis et auctoritate propositi intimaret et propria actione praemonstraret. Nam et ipsum locum tunc idem reuerentissimus pater abbatis iure regebat. Siquidem a temporibus ibidem antiquis, et episcopus cum clero, et abbas solebat manere cum monachis; qui tamen et ipsi ad curam episcopi familiariter pertinerent. Quia nimirum Aidan, qui primus eius loci episcopus fuit, cum monachis illuc et ipse monachus adueniens monachicam in eo conuersionem instituit; quomodo et prius beatus pater Augustinus in Cantia fecisse noscitur, scribente ei reuerentissimo papa Gregorio, quod et supra posuimus. ‘Sed quia tua fraternitas,’ inquit, ‘monasterii regulis erudita seorsum fieri non debet a clericis suis, in ecclesia Anglorum, quae nuper auctore Deo ad fidem perducta est, hanc debet conuersionem instituere, quae initio nascentis ecclesiae fuit patribus nostris; in quibus nullus eorum ex his, quae possidebant, aliquid suum esse dicebat, sed erant eis omnia communia.’

[28] Exin Cudberct crescentibus meritis religiosae intentionis, ad anchoriticae quoque contemplationis, quae diximus, silentia secreta peruenit. Uerum quia de uita illius et uirtutibus ante annos plures sufficienter et uersibus heroicis, et simplici oratione conscripsimus, hoc tantum in praesenti commemorare satis sit, quod aditurus insulam protestatus est fratribus, dicens: ‘Si mihi diuina gratia in loco illo donauerit, ut de opere manuum mearum uiuere queam, libens ibi morabor; sin alias, ad uos citissime Deo uolente reuertar.’ Erat autem locus et aquae prorsus et frugis et arboris inops, sed et spirituum malignorum frequentia humanae habitationi minus accommodus; sed ad uotum uiri Dei habitabilis per omnia factus est, siquidem ad aduentum eius spiritus recessere maligni. Cum autem ipse sibi ibidem expulsis hostibus mansionem angustam circumuallante aggere et domus in ea necessarias, iuuante fratrum manu, id est oratorium et habitaculum commune,

construxisset, iussit fratres in eiusdem habitaculi pauimento foueam facere; erat autem tellus durissima et saxosa, cui nulla omnino spes uenae fontanae uideretur inesse. Quod dum facerent, ad fidem et preces famuli Dei, alio die aqua plena inuenta est, quae usque ad hanc diem sufficientem cunctis illo aduenientibus gratiae suae caelestis copiam ministrat. Sed et ferramenta sibi ruralia cum frumento adferri rogauit, quod dum praeparata terra tempore congruo seminaret, nil omnino, non dico spicarum, sed ne herbae quidem ex eo germinare usque ad aestatis tempora contigit. Unde uisitantibus se ex more fratribus hordeum iussit adferri, si forte uel natura soli illius, uel uoluntas esset superni largitoris, ut illius frugis ibi potius seges oriretur. Quod dum sibi adlatum ultra omne tempus serendi, ultra omnem spem fructificandi eodem in agro sereret, mox copiosa seges exorta desideratam proprii laboris uiro Dei refectionem praebebat.

Cum ergo multis ibidem annis Deo solitarius seruiret, (tanta autem erat altitudo aggeris, quo mansio eius erat uallata, ut caelum tantum ex ea, cuius introitum sitiebat, aspicere posset), contigit, ut congregata synodo non parua sub praesentia regis Ecgfridi iuxta fluuium Alne, in loco, qui dicitur Aduifyrði, quod significat ‘ad duplex uadum,’ cui beatae memoriae Theodorus archiepiscopus praesidebat, unanimo omnium consensu ad episcopatum ecclesiae Lindisfarnensis eligeretur. Qui cum multis legatariis ac litteris ad se praemissis nequaquam suo monasterio posset erui, tandem rex ipse praefatus, una cum sanctissimo antistite Trumuine, nec non et aliis religiosis ac potentibus uiris insulam nauigauit. Conueniunt et de ipsa insula Lindisfarnensi in hoc ipsum multi de fratribus, genuflectunt omnes, adiurant per Dominum, lacrimas fundunt, obsecrant; donec ipsum quoque lacrimis plenum dulcibus extrahunt latebris, atque ad synodum pertrahunt. Quo dum perueniret, quamuis multum renitens, unanima cunctorum uoluntate superatur, atque ad suscipiendum episcopatus officium collum submittere compellitur; eo maxime uictus sermone, quod famulus Domini Boisil, cum ei mente prophetica cuncta, quae eum essent superuentura, patefaceret, antistitem quoque eum futurum esse praedixerat. Nec tamen statim ordinatio decreta, sed peracta hieme, quae imminebat, in ipsa sollemnitate paschali completa est Eboraci sub praesentia praefati regis Ecgfridi, conuenientibus ad consecrationem eius VII episcopis, in quibus beatae memoriae Theodorus primatum tenebat. Electus est autem primo in episcopatum Hagustaldensis ecclesiae pro Tunbercto, qui ab episcopatu fuerat depositus; sed quoniam ipse plus Lindisfarnensi ecclesiae, in qua conuersatus fuerat, dilexit praefici, placuit, ut Eata reuerso ad sedem ecclesiae Hagustaldensis, cui regendae primo fuerat ordinatus, Cudberct ecclesiae Lindisfarnensis gubernacula susciperet.

Qui susceptum episcopatus gradum ad imitationem beatorum apostolorum uirtutum ornabat operibus. Commissam namque sibi plebem, et orationibus protegebat adsiduus, et admonitionibus saluberrimis ad caelestia uocabat. Et, quod maxime doctores iuuare solet, ea, quae agenda docebat, ipse prius

agendo praemonstrabat. Erat quippe ante omnia diuinae caritatis igne feruidus, patientiae uirtute modestus, orationum deuotioni solertissime intentus, affabilis omnibus, qui ad se consolationis gratia ueniebant; hoc ipsum quoque orationis loco ducens, si infirmis fratribus opem suae exhortationis tribueret;

sciens, quia, qui dixit: ‘Diliges Dominum Deum tuum,’ dixit et: ‘Diliges proximum.’ Erat abstinentiae castigatione insignis, erat gratia conpunctionis semper ad caelestia suspensus. Denique cum sacrificium Deo uictimae salutaris offerret, non eleuata in altum uoce, sed profusis ex imo pectore lacrimis, Domino sua uota commendabat.

[29] Duobus autem annis in episcopatu peractis repetiit insulam ac monasterium suum, diuino admonitus oraculo, quia dies sibi mortis, uel uitae magis illius, quae sola uita dicenda est, iam adpropiaaret introitus; sicut ipse quoque tempore eodem nonnullis, sed uerbis obscurioribus, quae tamen postmodum manifeste intellexerentur, solita sibi simplicitate pandebat; quibusdam autem hoc idem etiam manifeste reuelabat.

Erat enim presbyter uitae uenerabilis nomine Hereberct, iamdudum uiro Dei spiritalis amicitiae foedere copulatus; qui, in insula stagni illius pergrandis, de quo Deruentionis fluuii primordia erumpunt, uitam ducens solitariam, annis singulis eum uisitare, et monita ab eo perpetuae salutis audire solebat. Hic cum audiret eum ad ciuitatem Lugubariam deuenisse, uenit ex more, cupiens salutaribus eius exhortationibus ad superna desideria magis magisque accendi. Qui dum sese alterutrum caelestis uitae poculis debriarent, dixit inter alia antistes: ‘Memento, frater Heriberct, ut modo, quicquid opus habes, me interroges mecumque loquaris; postquam enim ab inuicem digressi fuerimus, non ultra nos in hoc saeculo carnis obtutibus inuicem aspiciemus. Certus sum namque, quia tempus meae resolutionis instat, et uelox est depositio tabernaculi mei.’ Qui haec audiens prouolutus est eius uestigiis, et fuis cum gemitu lacrimis: ‘Obsecro,’ inquit, ‘per Dominum, ne me deseras, sed tui memor sis fidissimi sodalis, rogesque supernam pietatem, ut, cui simul in terris seruiuimus, ad eius uidendam gratiam simul transeamus ad caelos. Nosti enim, quia ad tui oris imperium semper uiuere studui, et, quicquid ignorantia uel fragilitate deliqui, aequae ad tuae uoluntatis examen mox emendare curau.’ Incubuit precibus antistes, statimque edoctus in spiritu inpetrasse se, quod petebat a Domino: ‘Surge,’ inquit, ‘frater mi, et noli plorare, sed gaudio gaude, quia, quod rogauimus, superna nobis clementia donauit.’

Cuius promissi et prophetiae ueritatem sequens rerum astruxit euentus; quia et digredientes ab inuicem non se ultra corporaliter uiderunt, et uno eodemque die, hoc est XIIIo Kalendarum Aprilium, egredientes e corpore spiritus eorum mox beata inuicem uisione coniuncti sunt, atque angelico ministerio pariter ad regnum caeleste translati. Sed Heriberct diutina prius infirmitate decoquitur; illa, ut credibile est, dispensatione dominicae pietatis, ut, siquid minus haberet meriti a beato Cudbercto, suppleret hoc castigans

longae egritudinis dolor; quatinus aequatus gratia suo intercessori, sicut uno eodemque tempore cum eo de corpore egredi, ita etiam una atque indissimili sede perpetuac beatitudinis meruisset recipi.

Obiit autem pater reuerentissimus in insula Farne, multum deprecatus fratres, ut ibi quoque sepeliretur, ubi non paruo tempore pro domino militaret. Attamen tandem eorum precibus uictus assensum dedit, ut ad insulam Lindisfarnensium relatus, in ecclesia deponeretur. Quod dum factum esset, episcopatum ecclesiae illius anno uno seruabat uenerabilis antistes Uilfrid, donec eligeretur, qui pro Cudbercto antistes ordinari deberet.

Ordinatus est autem post haec Eadberct uir scientia scripturarum diuinarum simul et praeceptorum caelestium obseruantia, ac maxime elimosynarum operatione insignis; ita ut iuxta legem omnibus annis decimam non solum quadrupedum, uerum etiam frugum omnium, atque pomorum, nec non et uestimentorum partem pauperibus daret.

[30] Uolens autem latius demonstrare diuina dispensatio, quanta in gloria uir Domini Cudberct post mortem uiueret, cuius ante mortem uita sublimis crebris etiam miraculorum patebat indiciis, transactis sepulturae eius annis XI, inmisit in animo fratrum, ut tollerent ossa illius, quae more mortuorum consumto iam et in puluerem redacto corpore reliquo sicca inuenienda putabant; atque in nouo recondita loculo in eodem quidem loco, sed supra pauimentum dignae uenerationis gratia locarent. Quod dum sibi placuisse Eadbercto antistiti suo referrent, adnuit consilio eorum, iussitque, ut die depositionis eius hoc facere meminissent.' Fecerunt autem ita, et aperientes sepulchrum, inuenerunt corpus totum, quasi adhuc uiueret, integrum et flexibilibus artuum compagibus multo dormienti quam mortuo similis; sed et uestimenta omnia, quibus indutum erat, non solum intemerata, uerum etiam prisca nouitate et claritudine miranda parebant. Quod ubi uidere fratres, nimio mox timore perculsi, festinarunt referre antistiti, quae inuenerant. Qui tum forte in remotiore ab ecclesia loco refluus undique pelagi fluctibus cincto, solitarius manebat. In hoc etenim semper quadragesimae tempus agere, in hoc XL ante dominicum natale dies in magna continentiae, orationis, et lacrimarum deuotione transigere solebat; in quo etiam uenerabilis praedecessor eius Cudberct, priusquam insulam Farne peteret, aliquandiu secretus Domino militabat.

A dtulerunt autem ei et partem indumentorum, quae corpus sanctum ambierant, quae cum ille et munera gratanter acciperet, et miracula libenter audiret, nam et ipsa indumenta quasi patris adhuc corpori circumdata miro deosculabatur affectu, 'Noua,' inquit, 'indumenta corpori pro his, quae tulistis, circumdate, et sic reponite in arca, quam parastis. Scio autem certissime, quia non diu uacuis remanebit locus ille, qui tanta miraculi caelestis gratia sacratus est; et quam beatus est, cui in eo facultatem quiescendi Dominus totius beatitudinis auctor atque largitor praestare dignabitur.' Haec et huiusmodi plura ubi multis cum lacrimis et magna conpunctione antistes lingua etiam tremente conpleuit, fecerunt fratres, ut iusserat; et inuolutum nouo amictu

corpus, nouaque in theca reconditum, supra pauimentum sanctuarii posuerunt.

Nec mora, Deo dilectus antistes Eadberct morbo correptus est acerbo, ac per dies crescente, multumque ingrauescente ardore langoris, non multo post, id est pridie Nonas Maias, etiam ipse migravit ad Dominum; cuius corpus in sepulchro benedicti patris Cudbercti ponentes, adposuerunt desuper arcam, in qua incorrupta eiusdem patris membra locauerant. In quo etiam loco signa sanitatum aliquoties facta meritis amborum testimonium ferunt, e quibus aliqua in libro uitae illius olim memoriae mandauimus. Sed et in hac historia quaedam, quae nos nuper audisse contigit, superadicere commodum duximus.

[31] Erat in eodem monasterio frater quidam, nomine Badudegn, tempore non pauco hospitum ministerio deseruiens, qui nunc usque superest, testimonium habens ab uniuersis fratribus, cunctisque superuenientibus hospitibus, quod uir esset multae pietatis ac religionis, iniunctoque sibi officio supernae tantum mercedis gratia subditus. Hic cum quadam die lenas siue saga, quibus in hospitale utebatur, in mari lauasset, rediens domum, repentina medio itinere molestia tactus est, ita ut corruens in terram, et aliquandiu pronus iacens, uix tandem resurgeret. Resurgens autem sensit dimidiam corporis sui partem a capite usque ad pedes paralysis langore depressam, et maximo cum labore baculo innitens domum peruenit.

Crescebat morbus paulatim, et nocte superueniente grauior effectus est, ita ut die redeunte uix ipse per se exsurgere aut incedere ualeret. Quo affectus incommodo, concepit utillimum mente consilium, ut ad ecclesiam, quoquo modo posset, perueniens, intraret ad tumbam reuerentissimi patris Cudbercti, ibique genibus flexis supplex supernam pietatem rogaret, ut uel ab huiuscemodi langore, si hoc sibi utile esset, liberaretur; uel, si se tali molestia diutius castigari diuina prouidente gratia oporteret, patienter dolorem ac placida mente sustineret inlatum. Fecit igitur, ut animo disposuerat, et inbecilles artus baculo sustentans intrauit ecclesiam; ac prosternens se ad corpus uiri Dei, pia intentione per eius auxilium Dominum sibi propitium fieri precabatur; atque inter preces uelut in soporem solutus, sentit, ut ipse postea referre erat solitus, quasi magnam latamque manum caput sibi in parte, qua dolebat, tetigisse, eodemque tactu totam illam, quae langore pressa fuerat, corporis sui partem, paulatim fugiente dolore, ac sanitate subsequente, ad pedes usque pertransisse. Quo facto, mox euigilans sanissimus surrexit, ac pro sua sanitate Domino gratias denuo referens, quid erga se actum esset, fratribus indicauit; cunctisque congaudentibus, ad ministerium, quod sollicitus exhibere solebat, quasi flagello probante castigatior, rediit.

Sed et indumenta, quibus Deo dicatum corpus Cudbercti, uel uiuum antea, uel postea defunctum uestierant, etiam ipsa a gratia curandi non uacarunt, sicut in uolumine uitae et uirtutum eius quisque legerit, inueniet.

[32] Nec silentio praetereundum, quod ante triennium per reliquias eius factum, nuper mihi per ipsum, in quo factum est, fratrem innotuit.

Est autem factum in monasterio, quod iuxta amnem Dacore constructum ab eo cognomen accepit, cui tunc uir religiosus Suidberct abbatis iure praefuit.

Erat in eo quidam adolescens, cui tumor deformis palpebram oculi fedauerat; qui cum per dies crescens oculo interitum minaretur, curabant medici hunc adpositis pigmentorum fomentis emollire, nec ualebant. Quidam abscidendum esse docebant, alii hoc fieri metu maioris periculi uetabant. Cumque tempore non pauco frater praefatus tali incommodo laboraret, neque inminens oculo exitium humana manus curare ualeret, quin per dies augesceret, contigit eum subito diuinae pietatis gratia per sanctissimi patris Cudbercti reliquias sanari. Nam quando fratres sui corpus ipsius post multos sepulturae annos incorruptum reppererunt, tulerunt partem de capillis, quam more reliquiarum rogantibus amicis dare, uel ostendere in signum miraculi possent.

Harum particulam reliquiarum eo tempore habebat penes se quidam de presbyteris eiusdem monasterii nomine Thruired, qui nunc ipsius monasterii abbas est. Qui cum die quadam ingressus ecclesiam, aperuisset thecam reliquiarum, ut portionem earum roganti amico praestaret, contigit et ipsum adolescentem, cui oculus languebat, in eadem tunc ecclesia adesse. Cumque presbyter portionem, quantam uoluit, amico dedisset, residuum dedit adolescenti, ut suo in loco reponeret. At ille salubri instinctu admonitus, cum accepisset capillos sancti capitis, adposuit palpebrae languenti, et aliquandiu tumorem illum infestum horum adpositione comprimere ac mollire curabat. Quo facto, reliquias, ut iussus erat, sua in theca recondidit, credens suum oculum capillis uiri Dei, quibus adtactus erat, ocius esse sanandum. Neque eum sua fides fefellit. Erat enim, ut referre est solitus, tunc hora circiter secunda diei. Sed cum alia, quaeque dies illa exigebat, cogitaret et faceret, imminente hora ipsius diei sexta, repente contingens oculum ita sanum cum palpebra inuenit, ac si nil umquam in eo deformitatis ac tumoris apparuisset.

LIBER QUINTUS

[1] Successit autem uiro Domini Cudbercto in exercenda uita solitaria, quam in insula Farne ante episcopatus sui tempora gerebat, uir uenerabilis Oidiluald, qui multis annis in monasterio, quod dicitur Inhrypum, acceptum presbyteratus officium condignis gradu ipse consecrabat actibus. Cuius ut meritum, uel uita qualis fuerit, certius clarescat, unum eius narro miraculum, quod mihi unus e fratribus, propter quos et in quibus patratum est, ipse narrauit, uidelicet Gudfrid, uenerabilis Christi famulus et presbyter, qui etiam postea fratribus eiusdem ecclesiae Lindisfarnensis, in qua educatus est, abbatis iure praefuit.

‘Ueni,’ inquit, ‘cum duobus fratribus aliis ad insulam Farne, loqui desiderans cum reuerentissimo patre Oidilualdo; cumque allocutione eius refecti, et benedictione petita domum rediremus, ecce subito, positis nobis in medio mari, interrupta est serenitas, qua uehebamur, et tanta ingruit tamque fera tempestatis hiems, ut neque uelo neque remigio quicquam proficere, neque aliud quam mortem sperare ualeremus. Cumque diu multum cum uento pelagoque frustra certantes, tandem post terga respiceremus, si forte uel ipsam, de qua egressi eramus, insulam aliquo conamine repetere possemus, inuenimus nos undiqueuersum pari tempestate praeclosos, nullamque spem nobis in nobis restare salutis Ubi autem longius uisum leuauimus, uidimus in ipsa insula Farne egressum de latibulis suis amantissimum Deo patrem Oidilualdum iter nostrum inspicere. Audito etenim fragore procellarum ac feruentis oceani exierat uidere, quid nobis accideret; cumque nos in labore ac desperatione positos cerneret, flectebat genua sua ad patrem Domini nostri Iesu Christi pro nostra uita et salute precaturus. Et cum orationem conpleret, simul tumida aequora placauit; adeo ut, cessante per omnia saeuitia tempestatis, secundi nos uenti ad terram usque per plana maris terga comitarentur. Cumque euadentes ad terram, nauculam quoque nostram ab undis exportaremus, mox eadem, quae nostri gratia modicum siluerat, tempestas rediit, et toto illo die multum furere non cessauit; ut palam daretur intellegi, quia modica illa, quae prouenerat, intercapedo quietis, ad uiri Dei preces nostrae euasionis gratia caelitus donata est.’

Mansit autem idem uir Dei in insula Farne XII annis, ibidemque defunctus; sed in insula Lindisfarnensi iuxta praefatorum corpora episcoporum in ecclesia beati apostoli Petri sepultus est. Gesta uero sunt haec temporibus Aldfridi regis, qui post fratrem suum Ecgfridum genti Nordanhymbrorum X et VIII annis praefuit.

[2] Cuius regni principio defuncto Eata episcopo, Iohannes uir sanctus Hagustaldensis ecclesiae praesulatum suscepit; de quo plura uirtutum miracula, qui eum familiariter nouerunt, dicere solent, et maxime uir reuerentissimus ac ueracissimus Bercthun, diaconus quondam eius, nunc autem abbas monasterii, quod uocatur Inderauuda, id est In silua Derorum; e

quibus aliqua memoriae tradere commodum duximus.

Est mansio quaedam secretior, nemore raro et uallo circumdata, non longe ab Hagustaldensi ecclesia, id est unius ferme miliarii et dimidii spatio interfluente Tino amne separata, habens clymeterium sancti Michahelis archangeli, in qua uir Dei saepius, ubi oportunitas adridebat temporis, et maxime in quadragesima, manere cum paucis, atque orationibus ac lectioni quietus operam dare consueuerat. Cumque tempore quodam, incipiente quadragesima, ibidem mansurus adueniret, iussit suis quaerere pauperem aliquem maiore infirmitate uel inopia grauatum, quem secum habere illis diebus ad faciendam elimosynam possent; sic enim semper facere solebat.

Erat autem in uilla non longe posita quidam adulescens mutus, episcopo notus, nam saepius ante illum percipiendae elimosynae gratia uenire consueuerat, qui ne unum quidem sermonem umquam profari poterat; sed et scabiem tantam ac furfures habebat in capite, ut nil umquam capillorum ei in superiore parte capitis nasci ualeret, tantum in circuitu horridi crines stare uidebantur. Hunc ergo adduci praecipit episcopus, et ei in conseptis eiusdem mansionis paruum tugurium fieri, in quo manens cotidianam ab eis stipem acciperet. Cumque una quadragesimae esset impleta septimana, sequente dominica iussit ad se intrare pauperem, ingresso linguam proferre ex ore, ac sibi ostendere iussit; et adprehendens eum de mento, signum sanctae crucis linguae eius inpressit, quam signatam reuocare in os, et loqui illum praecepit: ‘Dicito,’

inquiens, ‘aliquod uerbum, dicito gae,’ quod est lingua Anglorum uerbum adfirmandi et consentiendi, id est, etiam. Dixit ille statim, soluto uinculo linguae, quod iussus erat. Addidit episcopus nomina litterarum: ‘Dicito A’; dixit ille A. ‘Dicito B’; dixit ille et hoc.

Cumque singula litterarum nomina dicente episcopo responderet, addidit et syllabas ac uerba dicenda illi proponere. Et cum in omnibus consequenter responderet, praecepit eum sententias longiores dicere, et fecit; neque ultra cessauit tota die illa et nocte sequente, quantum uigilare potuit, ut ferunt, qui praesentes fuere, loqui aliquid, et arcana suae cogitationis ac uoluntatis, quod numquam antea potuit, aliis ostendere; in similitudinem illius diu claudi, qui curatus ab apostolis Petro et Iohanne, exiliens stetit, et ambulabat; et intrauit cum illis in templum, ambulans, et exiliens, et laudans Dominum; gaudens nimirum uti officio pedum, quo tanto erat tempore destitutus. Cuius sanitati congaudens episcopus praecepit medico etiam sanandae scabredini capitis eius curam adhibere.

Fecit, ut iusserat, et iuuante benedictione ac precibus antistitis, nata est cum sanitate cutis uenusta species capillorum, factusque est iuuenis limpidus uultu et loquella promptus, capillis pulcherrime crispis, qui ante fuerat deformis, pauper, et mutus. Sicque de percepta laetatus sospitate, offerente etiam ei episcopo, ut in sua familia manendi locum acciperet, magis domum reuersus est.

[3] Narrauit idem Bercthun et aliud de praefato antistite miraculum:

quia cum reuerentissimus uir Uilfrid post longum exilium in episcopatum esset Hagustaldensis ecclesiae receptus, et idem Iohannes, defuncto Bosa uiro multae sanctitatis et humilitatis, episcopus pro eo Eboraci substitutus, uenerit ipse tempore quodam ad monasterium uirginum in loco, qui uocatur Uetadun, cui tunc Heriburg abbatissa praefuit. ‘Ubi cum uenissemus,’ inquit, ‘et magno uniuersorum gaudio suscepti essemus, indicauit nobis abbatissa, quia quaedam de numero uirginum, quae erat filia ipsius carnalis, grauissimo langore teneretur; quia flebotomata est nuper in brachio, et cum esset in studio, tacta est infirmitate repentini doloris, quo mox increscente, magis grauatum est brachium illud uulneratum, ac uersum in tumorem adeo, ut uix duabus manibus circumplecti posset, ipsaque iacens in lecto prae nimietate doloris iam moritura uideretur. Rogauit ergo episcopum abbatissa, ut intrare ad eam, ac benedicere illam dignaretur, quia crederet eam ad benedictionem uel tactum illius mox melius habituram. Interrogans autem ille, quando flebotomata esset puella, et ut cognouit, quia in luna quarta, dixit: ‘Multum insipienter et indocte fecistis in luna IIII flebotomando. Memini enim beatae memoriae Theodorum archiepiscopum dicere, quia periculosa sit satis illius temporis flebotomia, quando et lumen lunae, et reuma oceani in cremento est. Et quid ego possum puellae, si moritura est, facere?’ At illa instantius obsecrans pro filia, quam oppido diligebat, nam et abbatissam eam pro se facere disposuerat, tandem obtinuit, ut ad languentem intraret. Intrauit ergo me secum adsumto ad uirginem, quae iacebat multo, ut dixi, dolore constricta, et brachio in tantum grossescente, ut nihil prorsus in cubito flexionis haberet; et adstans dixit orationem super illam, ac benedicens egressus est. Cumque post haec hora competente consideremus ad mensam, adueniens quidam clamauit me foras, et ait: ‘Postulat Quoenburg’ (hoc enim erat nomen uirginis), ‘ut ocius regrediaris ad eam.’ Quod dum facerem, repperi illam ingrediens uultu hilariorem, et uelut sospiti similem. Et dum adsiderem illi, dixit: ‘Uis petamus bibere?’ At ego: ‘Uolo,’

inquam, ‘et multum delector, si potes.’ Cumque oblato poculo biberemus ambo, coepit mihi dicere, quia ‘ex quo episcopus oratione pro me et benedictione completa egressus est, statim melius habere incipio; etsi necdum uires pristinas recepi, dolor tamen omnis et de brachio, ubi ardentior inerat, et de toto meo corpore, uelut ipso episcopo foras eum exportante, funditus ablatu est, tametsi tumor adhuc brachii manere uidetur.’ Abeuntibus autem nobis inde, continuo fugatum dolorem membrorum fuga quoque tumoris horrendi secuta est;

et erepta morti ac doloribus uirgo, laudes Domino Saluatori una cum ceteris, qui ibi erant, seruis illius referebat.’

[4] Aliud quoque non multum huic dissimile miraculum de praefato antistite narrauit idem abbas, dicens: ‘Uilla erat comitis cuiusdam, qui uocabatur Puch, non longe a monasterio nostro, id est duum ferme milium spatio separata; cuius coniux XL ferme diebus erat acerbissimo langore detenta, ita ut tribus septimanis non posset de cubiculo, in quo iacebat, foras efferri. Contigit autem

eo tempore uirum Dei illo ad dedicandam ecclesiam ab eodem comite uocari.

Cumque dedicata esset ecclesia, rogauit comes eum ad prandendum in domum suam ingredi. Rennuit episcopus dicens se ad monasterium, quod proxime erat, debere reuerti. At ille obnixius precibus instans, uouit etiam se elimosynas pauperibus daturum, dummodo ille dignaretur eo die domum suam ingrediens ieiunium soluere. Rogauit et ego una cum illo, promittens etiam me elimosynas in alimoniam inopum dare, dum ille domum comitis pransurus, ac benedictionem daturus intraret. Cumque hoc tarde ac difficulter inpetraremus, intrauimus ad reficiendum. Miserat autem episcopus mulieri, quae infirma iacebat, de aqua benedicta, quam in dedicationem ecclesiae consecrauerat, per unum de his, qui mecum uenerant, fratribus;

praecipiens, ut gustandam illi daret, et, ubicumque maximum ei dolorem inesse didicisset, de ipsa eam aqua lauaret. Quod ut factum est, surrexit statim mulier sana, et non solum se infirmitate longa carere, sed et perditas dudum uires recepisse sentiens, obtulit poculum episcopo ac nobis; coeptumque ministerium nobis omnibus propinandi usque ad prandium completum non omisit; imitata socrum beati Petri, quae cum febrium fuisset ardoribus fatigata, ad tactum manus dominicae surrexit, et sanitate simul ac uirtute recepta ministrabat eis.’

[5] Alio item tempore uocatus ad dedicandam ecclesiam comitis uocabulo Addi, cum postulatum conplesset ministerium, rogatus est ab eodem comite intrare ad unum de pueris eius, qui acerrima egritudine premebatur, ita ut, deficiente penitus omni membrorum officio, iamiamque moriturus esse uideretur; cui etiam locus iam tunc erat praeparatus, in quo defunctus condi deberet. Addidit autem uir etiam lacrimas precibus, diligenter obsecrans, ut intraret oraturus pro illo, quia multum necessaria sibi esset uita ipsius; crederet uero, quia, si ille ei manum inponere, atque eum benedicere uoluisset, statim melius haberet. Intrauit ergo illo episcopus, et uidit eum mestis omnibus iam morti proximum, positumque loculum iuxta eum, in quo sepeliendus poni deberet; dixitque orationem, ac benedixit eum, et egrediens dixit solito consolantium sermone: ‘Bene conualescas, et cito.’ Cumque post haec sederent ad mensam, misit puer ad dominum suum, rogans sibi poculum uini mittere, quia sitiret. Gaudis ille multum, quia bibere posset, misit ei calicem uini benedictum ab episcopo; quem ut bibit, surrexit continuo, et ueterno infirmitatis discussio, induit se ipse uestimentis suis; et egressus inde intrauit, ac salutauit episcopum et conuiuas, dicens, quia ipse quoque delectaretur manducare et bibere cum eis. Iusserunt eum sedere secum ad epulas, multum gaudentes de sospitate illius.

Residebat, uescebatur, bibebat, laetabatur, quasi unus e conuiuiis agebat; et multis post haec annis uiuens, in eadem, quam acceperat, salute permansit. Hoc autem miraculum memoratus abbas non se praesente factum, sed ab his, qui praesentes fuere, sibi perhibet esse relatum.

[6] Neque hoc praetereundum silentio, quod famulus Christi Heribald in se ipso ab eo factum solet narrare miraculum, qui tunc quidem in clero illius

conuersatus, nunc monasterio, quod est iuxta ostium Tini fluminis, abbatis iure praeest. ‘Uitam,’

inquit, ‘illius, quantum hominibus aestimare fas est, quod praesens optime cognoui, per omnia episcopo dignam esse conperi. Sed et cuius meriti apud internum testem habitus sit, et in multis aliis, et in me ipso maxime expertus sum; quippe quem ab ipso, ut ita dicam, mortis limite reuocans, ad uiam uitae sua oratione ac benedictione reduxit. Nam cum primaeuo adulescentiae tempore in clero illius degerem, legendi quidem canendique studiis traditus, sed non adhuc animum perfecte a iuuenilibus cohibens inlecebris, contigit die quadam nos iter agentes cum illo deuenisse in uiam planam et amplam, aptamque cursui equorum; coeperuntque iuuenes, qui cum ipso erant, maxime laici, postulare episcopum, ut cursu maiore equos suos inuicem probare liceret. At ille primo negauit, otiosum dicens esse, quod desiderabant; sed ad ultimum multorum unanima intentione deuictus: “Facite,” inquit, “si uultis, ita tamen, ut Herebald ab illo se certamine funditus absteineat.” Porro ipse diligentius obsecrans, ut et mihi certandi cum illis copia daretur, (fidebam namque equo, quem mihi ipse optimum donauerat), nequaquam inpetrare potui.

‘At cum saepius huc atque illuc, spectante me et episcopo, concitatis in cursum equis reuerterentur; et ipse lasciuo superatus animo non me potui cohibere, sed, prohibente licet illo, ludentibus me miscui, et simul cursu equi contendere coepi. Quod dum agerem, audiui illum post tergum mihi cum gemitu dicentem: “O quam magnum uae facis mihi sic equitando!” Et ego audiens, nihilominus coeptis institi uetitis. Nec mora, dum feruens equus quoddam itineris concauum ualentiore impetu transiliret, lapsus decidi, et mox uelut emoriens sensum penitus motumque omnem perdi. Erat namque illo in loco lapis terrae aequalis obtectus cespite tenui, neque ullus alter in tota illa campi planitie lapis inueniri poterat; casuque euenit, uel potius diuina prouisione ad puniendam inoboedientiae meae culpam, ut hunc capite ac manu, quam capiti ruens subposueram, tangerem, atque infracto pollice capitis quoque iunctura solueretur;

et ego, ut dixi, simillimus mortuo fierem. Et quia moueri non poteram, tetenderunt ibidem papilionem, in quo iacerem. Erat autem hora diei circiter septima, a qua ad uesperam usque quietus et quasi mortuus permanens, tunc paululum reuiuisco, ferorque domum a sociis, ac tacitus tota nocte perduro. Uomebam autem sanguinem, eo quod et interanea essent ruendo conuulsa. At episcopus grauissime de casu et interitu meo dolebat, eo quod me speciali diligeret affectu; nec uoluit nocte illa iuxta morem cum clericis suis manere, uerum solus in oratione persistens noctem ducebat peruigilem, pro mea, ut reor, sospitate supernae pietati supplicans. Et mane primo ingressus ad me, ac dicta super me oratione, uocauit me nomine meo, et quasi de somno graui excitatum interrogauit, si nossem, quis esset, qui loqueretur ad me. At ego aperiens oculos aio: “Etiam; tu es antistes meus amatus.” “Potes,” inquit, “uiuere?” Et ego: “Possum,”

inquam, “per orationes uestras, si uouerit Dominus.”

‘Qui inponens capiti meo manum, cum uerbis benedictionis, rediit ad orandum; et post pusillum me reuisens, inuenit sedentem, et iam loqui ualentem; coepitque me interrogare, diuino, ut mox patuit, admonitus instinctu, an me esse baptizatum absque scrupulo nossem. Cui ego absque ulla me hoc dubietate scire respondi, quia salutari fonte in remissionem peccatorum essem ablutus; et nomen presbyteri, a quo me baptizatum noueram, dixi. At ille: “Si ab hoc,”

inquit, “sacerdote baptizatus es, non es perfecte baptizatus; noui namque eum, et quia cum esset presbyter ordinatus, nullatenus propter ingenii tarditatem potuit cathecizandi uel baptizandi ministerium discere, propter quod et ipse illum ab huius praesumptione ministerii, quod regulariter implere nequibat, omnimodis cessare praecepi.” Quibus dictis eadem hora me cathecizare ipse curauit; factumque est, ut, exsufflante illo in faciem meam, confestim me melius habere sentirem. Uocauit autem medicum, et dissolutam mihi emicranii iuncturam componere atque alligare iussit.

Tantumque mox accepta eius benedictione conualui, ut in crastinum ascendens equum cum ipso iter in alium locum facerem; nec multo post plene curatus uitali etiam unda perfusus sum.’

Mansit autem in episcopatu annis XXXIII, et sic caelestia regna conscendens, sepultus est in porticu sancti Petri in monasterio suo, quod dicitur In silua Derorum, anno ab incarnatione dominica DCCo XXIo. Nam cum prae maiore senectute minus episcopatui administrando sufficeret, ordinato in episcopatum Eboracensis ecclesiae Uilfrido presbytero suo, secessit ad monasterium praefatum, ibique uitam in Deo digna conuersatione conpleuit.

[7] Anno autem regni Aldfridi tertio, Caedualla, rex Occidentalium Saxonum, cum genti suae duobus annis strenuissime praeesset, relicto imperio propter Dominum regnumque perpetuum, uenit Romam; hoc sibi gloriae singularis desiderans adipisci, ut ad limina beatorum apostolorum fonte baptismatis ablueretur, in quo solo didicerat generi humano patere uitae caelestis introitum; simul etiam sperans, quia mox baptizatus, carne solutus ad aeterna gaudia iam mundus transiret; quod utrumque, ut mente disposuerat, Domino iuuante conpletum est. Etenim illo perueniens, pontificatum agente Sergio, baptizatus est die sancto sabbati paschalis anno ab incarnatione Domini DCLXXXVIII; et in albis adhuc positus, langore correptus, XIIo. Kalendarum Maiarum die solutus a carne, et beatorum est regno sociatus in caelis. Cui etiam tempore baptismatis papa memoratus Petri nomen inposuerat, ut beatissimo apostolorum principi, ad cuius sacratissimum corpus a finibus terrae pio ductus amore uenerat, etiam nominis ipsius consortio iungeretur; qui in eius quoque ecclesia sepultus est; et iubente pontifice epitaphium in eius monumento scriptum, in quo et memoria deuotionis ipsius fixa per saecula maneret, et legentes quoque uel audientes exemplum facti ad studium religionis accenderet. Scriptum est ergo hoc modo:

Culmen, opes, subolem, pollentia regna, triumphos, Exuuias, proceres, moenia, castra, lares; Quaeque patrum uirtus, et quae congegnerat ipse Caedual armipotens, liquit amore Dei;

Ut Petrum, sedemque Petri rex cerneret hospes, Cuius fonte meras sumeret almus aquas, Splendificumque iubar radianti carperet haustu, Ex quo uiuificus fulgor ubique fluit.

Percipiensque alacer rediuiuae praemia uitae, Barbaricam rabiem, nomen et inde suum Conuersus conuertit ouans; Petrumque uocari Sergius antistes iussit, ut ipse pater Fonte renascentis, quem Christi gratia purgans Protinus albatum uexit in arce poli.

Mira fides regis, clementia maxima Christi, Cuius consilium nullus adire potest!

Sospes enim ueniens supremo ex orbe Britanni, Per uarias gentes, per freta, perque uias, Urbem Romuleam uidit, templumque uerendum Aspexit Petri mystica dona gerens.

Candidus inter oues Christi sociabilis ibit; Corpore nam tumulum, mente superna tenet.

Conmutasse magis sceptrorum insignia credas, Quem regnum Christi promeruisse uides.

Hic depositus est Caedual, qui et Petrus, rex Saxonum, sub die XII Kalendarum Maiarum, indictione II; qui uixit annos plus minus XXX, imperante domno Iustiniano piissimo Augusto, anno eius consulatus IIII, pontificante apostolico uiro domno Sergio papa anno secundo.

Abeunte autem Romam Caedualla, successit in regnum Ini de stirpe regia; qui cum XXXVII annis imperium tenuisset gentis illius, et ipse relicto regno ac iuuenioribus commendato, ad limina beatorum apostolorum Gregorio pontificatum tenente profectus est, cupiens in uicinia sanctorum locorum ad tempus peregrinari in terris, quo familiarius a sanctis recipi mereretur in caelis; quod his temporibus plures de gente Anglorum, nobiles, ignobiles, laici, clerici, uiri ac feminae certatim facere consuerunt.

[8] Anno autem post hunc, quo Caedualla Romae defunctus est, proximo, id est DCXC incarnationis dominicae, Theodorus beatae memoriae archiepiscopus, senex et plenus dierum, id est annorum LXXXVIII, defunctus est; quem se numerum annorum fuisse habiturum ipse iamdudum somni reuelatione edoctus, suis praedicere solebat.

Mansit autem in episcopatu annis XXII, sepultusque est in ecclesia sancti Petri, in qua omnium episcoporum Doruuernensium sunt corpora deposita; de quo una cum consortibus eiusdem sui gradus recte ac ueraciter dici potest, quia ‘corpora ipsorum in pace sepulta sunt, et nomen eorum uiuet in generationes et generationes.’ Ut enim breuiter dicam, tantum profectus spiritalis tempore praesulatus illius Anglorum ecclesiae, quantum numquam antea potuere, ceperunt.

Cuius personam, uitam, aetatem, et obitum, epitaphium quoque monumenti ipsius uersibus heroicis XXX et IIII palam ac lucide cunctis illo aduenientibus

pandit; quorum primi sunt hi:

Hic sacer in tumba pausat cum corpore pracsul, Quem nunc Theodorum lingua Pelasga uocat.

Princeps pontificum, felix summusque sacerdos Limpida discipulis dogmata disseruit.

Ultimi autem hi:

Namque diem nonamdecimam September habebat, Cum carnis claustra spiritus egreditur.

Alma nouae scandens felix consortia uitae, Ciuibus angelicis iunctus in arce poli.

Successit autem Theodoro in episcopatum Berctuald, qui erat abbas in monasterio, quod iuxta ostium aquilonale fluminis Genladae positum, Racuulfe nuncupatur; uir et ipse scientia scripturarum inbutus, sed et ecclesiasticis simul ac monasterialibus disciplinis summe instructus, tametsi praedecessori suo minime comparandus; qui electus est quidem in episcopatum anno dominicae incarnationis DCXC secundo, die primo mensis Iulii, regnantibus in Cantia Uictredo et SuÃ|bhardo; ordinatus autem anno sequente tertio die Kalendarum Iuliarum dominica a Goduine metropolitano episcopo Galliarum; et sedit in sede sua pridie Kalendarum Septembrium dominica; qui inter multos, quos ordinauit antistites, etiam Gebmundo Hrofensis ecclesiae praesule defuncto, Tobiam pro illo consecrauit, uirum Latina, Greca, et Saxonica lingua atque eruditione multipliciter instructum.

[9] Eo tempore uenerabilis et cum omni honorificentia nominandus famulus Christi et sacerdos Ecgberct, quem in Hibernia insula peregrinam ducere uitam pro adipiscenda in caelis patria retulimus, proposuit animo pluribus prodesse; id est inito opere apostolico, uerbum Dei aliquibus earum, quae nondum audierant, gentibus euangelizando committere; quarum in Germania plurimas nouerat esse nationes, a quibus Angli uel Saxones, qui nunc Britanniam incolunt, genus et originem duxisse noscuntur; unde hactenus a uicina gente Brettonum corrupte Garmani nuncupantur. Sunt autem Fresones, Rugini, Danai, Hunni, Antiqui Saxones, Boructuari; sunt alii perplures hisdem in partibus populi paganis adhuc ritibus seruientes, ad quos uenire praefatus Christi miles circumnauigata Brittania disposuit, siquos forte ex illis ereptos Satanae ad Christum transferre ualeret; uel, si hoc fieri non posset, Romam uenire ad uidenda atque adoranda beatorum apostolorum ac martyrum Christi limina cogitauit.

Sed ne aliquid horum perficeret, superna illa oracula simul et opera restiterunt. Siquidem electis sociis strenuissimis et ad praedicandum uerbum idoneis, utpote actione simul et eruditione praeclaris, praeparatis omnibus, quae nauigantibus esse necessaria uidebantur, uenit die quadam mane primo ad eum unus de fratribus, discipulus quondam in Brittania et minister Deo dilecti sacerdotis Boisili (cum esset idem Boisil praepositus monasterii Mailrosensis sub abbate Eata, ut supra narrauimus, referens ei uisionem, quae sibi eadem nocte apparuisset: ‘Cum expletis,’ inquit, ‘hymnis matutinalibus

in lectulo membra posuissem, ac leuis mihi somnus obrepsisset, apparuit magister quondam meus, et nutritor amantissimus Boisil, interrogauitque me, an eum cognoscere possem. Aio: “Etiam; tu es enim Boisil.” At ille: “Ad hoc,” inquit, “ueni, ut responsum Domini Saluatoris Ecgbercto adferam, quod te tamen referente oportet ad illum uenire. Dic ergo illi, quia non ualet iter, quod proposuit, implere; Dei enim uoluntatis est, ut ad Columbae monasteria magis docenda pergat.” Erat autem Columba primus doctor fidei Christianae transmontanis Pictis ad aquilonem, primusque fundator monasterii, quod in Hii insula multis diu Scottorum Pictorumque populis uenerabile mansit. Qui uidelicet Columba nunc a nonnullis composito a cella et Columba nomine Columcelli uocatur. Audiens autem uerba uisionis Ecgberct, praecepit fratri, qui retulerat, ne cuiquam haec alteri referret, ne forte inlusoria esset uisio. Ipse autem tacitus rem considerans, ueram esse timebat; nec tamen a praeparando itinere, quo ad gentes docendas iret, cessare uolebat.

At post dies paucos rursum uenit ad eum praefatus frater, dicens, quia et ea nocte sibi post expletos matutinos Boisil per uisum apparuerit, dicens: ‘Quare tam neglegenter ac tepide dixisti Ecgbercto, quae tibi dicenda praecepi? At nunc uade et dic illi, quia, uelit nolit, debet ad monasteria Columbae uenire, quia aratra eorum non recte incedunt; oportet autem eum ad rectum haec tramitem reuocare.’ Qui haec audiens denuo praecepit fratri, ne haec cui patefaceret. Ipse uero, tametsi certus est factus de uisione, nihilominus temptauit iter dispositum cum fratribus memoratis incipere. Cumque iam naui inposuissent, quae tanti itineris necessitas poscebat, atque oportunos aliquot dies uentos expectarent, facta est nocte quadam tam saeua tempestas, quae perditis nonnulla ex parte his, quae in naui erant, rebus, ipsam in latus iacentem inter undas relinqueret; saluata sunt tamen omnia, quae erant Ecgbercti et sociorum eius. Tum ipse quasi propheticum illud dicens, quia ‘propter me est tempestas haec,’ subtraxit se illi profectioni, et remanere domi passus est.

At uero unus de sociis eius, uocabulo Uictberct, cum esset et ipse contemptu mundi ac doctrinae scientia insignis, (nam multos annos in Hibernia peregrinus anchoreticam in magna perfectione uitam egerat), ascendit nauem, et Fresiam perueniens, duobus annis continuis genti illi ac regi eius Rathbedo uerbum salutis praedicabat, neque aliquem tanti laboris fructum apud barbaros inuenit auditores. Tum reuersus ad dilectae locum peregrinationis, solito in silentio uacare Domino coepit; et quoniam externis prodesse ad fidem non poterat, suis amplius ex uirtutum exemplis prodesse curabat.

[10] Ut autem uidit uir Domini Ecgberct, quia nec ipse ad praedicandum gentibus uenire permittebatur, retentus ob aliam sanctae ecclesiae utilitatem, de qua oraculo fuerat praemonitus; nec Uictberct illas deueniens in partes quicquam proficiebat, temptauit adhuc in opus uerbi mittere uiros sanctos et industrios, in quibus eximius Uilbrord presbyteri gradu et merito praefulgebat. Qui cum illo aduenissent, erant autem numero XII, diuertentes ad Pippinum ducem Francorum, gratanter ab illo suscepti sunt; et quia nuper citeriorem

Fresiam expulso inde Rathbedo rege ceperat, illo eos ad praedicandum misit; ipse quoque imperiali auctoritate iuuans, ne qui praedicantibus quicquam molestiae inferret; multisque eos, qui fidem suscipere uellent, beneficiis adtollens; unde factum est, opitulante gratia diuina, ut multos in breui ab idolatria ad fidem conuerterent Christi.

Horum secuti exempla duo quidam presbyteri de natione Anglorum, qui in Hibernia multo tempore pro aeterna patria exulauerant, uenerunt ad prouinciam Antiquorum Saxonum, si forte aliquos ibidem praedicando Christo adquirere possent. Erant autem unius ambo, sicut deuotionis, sic etiam uocabuli; nam uterque eorum appellabatur Heuuald; ea tamen distinctione, ut pro diuersa capillorum specie unus Niger Heuuald, alter Albus Heuuald diceretur; quorum uterque pietate religionis inbutus, sed Niger Heuuald magis sacrarum litterarum erat scientia institutus. Qui uenientes in prouinciam intrauerunt hospitium cuiusdam uilici, petieruntque ab eo, ut transmitterentur ad satrapam, qui super eum erat, eo quod haberent aliquid legationis et causae utilis, quod deberent ad illum perferre. Non enim habent regem idem Antiqui Saxones, sed satrapas plurimos suae genti praepositos, qui ingruente belli articulo mittunt aequaliter sortes, et, quemcumque sors ostenderit, hunc tempore belli ducem omnes sequuntur, huic obtemperant; peracto autem bello, rursum aequalis potentiae omnes fiunt satrapae. Suscepit ergo eos uilicus, et promittens se mittere eos ad satrapam, qui super se erat, ut petebant, aliquot diebus secum retinuit.

Qui cum cogniti essent a barbaris, quod essent alterius religionis, (nam et psalmis semper atque orationibus uacabant, et cotidie sacrificium Deo uictimae salutaris offerebant, habentes secum uascula sacra et tabulam altaris uice dedicatam), suspecti sunt habiti, quia, si peruenirent ad satrapam, et loquerentur cum illo, auerterent illum a diis suis, et ad nouam Christianae fidei religionem transferrent, sicque paulatim omnis eorum prouincia ueterem cogeretur noua mutare culturam. Itaque rapuerunt eos subito, et interemerunt; Album quidem Heuualdum ueloci occisione gladii, Nigellum autem longo suppliciorum cruciatu, et horrenda membrorum omnium disceptatione; quos interemtus in Rheno proiecerunt. Quod cum satrapa ille, quem uidere uolebant, audisset, iratus est ualde, quod ad se uenire uolentes peregrini non permitterentur; et mittens occidit uicanos illos omnes, uicumque incendio consumsit. Passi sunt autem praefati sacerdotes et famuli Christi Vo. Nonarum Octobrium die.

Nec martyrio eorum caelestia defuere miracula. Nam cum peremta eorum corpora amni, ut diximus, a paganis essent iniecta, contigit, ut haec contra impetum fluuii decurrentis, per XL fere milia passuum, ad ea usque loca, ubi illorum erant socii, transferrentur. Sed et radius lucis permaximus, atque ad caelum usque altus, omni nocte supra locum fulgebat illum, ubicumque ea peruenisse contingeret, et hoc etiam pagani, qui eos occiderant, intuentibus. Sed et unus ex eis in uisione nocturna apparuit cuidam de sociis suis, cui nomen erat Tilmon, uiro inlustri, et ad saeculum quoque nobili, qui de milite

factus fuerat monachus; indicans, quod eo loci corpora eorum posset inuenire, ubi lucem de caelo terris radiasse conspiceret.

Quod ita conpletum est. Inuenta namque eorum corpora iuxta honorem martyribus condignum recondita sunt, et dies passionis uel inuentionis eorum congrua illis in locis ueneratione celebratus. Denique gloriosissimus dux Francorum Pippin, ubi haec conperiit, misit, et adducta ad se eorum corpora condidit cum multa gloria in ecclesia Coloniae ciuitatis iuxta Rhenum. Fertur autem, quia in loco, quo occisi sunt, fons ebullierit, qui in eodem loco usque hodie copiosa fluenti sui dona profundat.

[11] Primis sane temporibus aduentus eorum in Fresiam, mox ut conperiit Uilbrord datam sibi a principe licentiam ibidem praedicandi, accelerauit uenire Romam, cuius sedi apostolicae tunc Sergius papa praeerat, ut cum eius licentia et benedictione desideratum euangelizandi gentibus opus iniret; simul et reliquias beatorum apostolorum ac martyrum Christi ab eo se sperans accipere, ut dum in gente, cui praedicaret, destructis idolis ecclesias institueret, haberet in promptu reliquias sanctorum, quas ibi introduceret; quibusque ibidem depositis, consequenter in eorum honorem, quorum essent illae, singula quaeque loca dedicaret. Sed et alia perplura, quae tanti operis negotium quaerebat, uel ibi discere uel inde accipere cupiebat. In quibus omnibus cum sui uoti compos esset effectus, ad praedicandum rediit.

Quo tempore fratres, qui erant in Fresia uerbi ministerio mancipati, elegerunt ex suo numero uirum modestum moribus, et mansuetum corde, Suidberctum, qui eis ordinaretur antistes, quem Britanniam destinatum ad petitionem eorum ordinauit reuerentissimus Uilfrid episcopus, qui tum forte patria pulsus in Merciorum regionibus exulabat. Non enim eo tempore habebat episcopum Cantia, defuncto quidem Theodoro, sed necdum Berctualdo successore eius, qui trans mare ordinandus ierat, ad sedem episcopatus sui reuerso.

Qui uidelicet Suidberct accepto episcopatu, de Britannia regressus, non multo post ad gentem Boructuarorum secessit, ac multos eorum praedicando ad uiam ueritatis perduxit. Sed expugnatis non longo post tempore Boructuaris a gente Antiquorum Saxonum, dispersi sunt quolibet hi, qui uerbum receperant; ipse antistes cum quibusdam Pippinum petiit, qui interpellante Bliththrydae coniuge sua, dedit ei locum mansionis in insula quadam Hreni, quae lingua eorum uocatur In litore; in qua ipse, constructo monasterio, quod hactenus heredes possident eius, aliquandiu continentissimam gessit uitam, ibique diem clausit ultimum.

Postquam uero per annos aliquot in Fresia, qui aduenerant, docuerunt, misit Pippin fauente omnium consensu uirum uenerabilem Uilbrordum Romam, cuius adhuc pontificatum Sergius habebat, postulans. ut eidem Fresonum genti archiepiscopus ordinaretur. Quod ita, ut petierat, inpletum est, anno ab incarnatione Domini DCXCVI.

Ordinatus est autem in ecclesia sanctae martyris Ceciliae, die natalis eius, inposito sibi a papa memorato nomine Clementis; ac mox remissus ad sedem

episcopatus sui, id est post dies XIII, ex quo in urbem uenerat.

Donauit autem ei Pippin locum cathedrae episcopalis in castello suo inlustri, quod antiquo gentium illarum uerbo Uiltaburg, id est Oppidum Uiltorum, lingua autem Gallica Traiectum uocatur; in quo aedificata ecclesia, reuerentissimus pontifex longe lateque uerbum fidei praedicans, multosque ab errore reuocans, plures per illas regiones ecclesias, sed et monasteria nonnulla construxit. Nam non multo post alios quoque illis in regionibus ipse constituit antistites ex eorum numero fratrum, qui uel secum, uel post se illo ad praedicandum uenerant; ex quibus aliquanti iam dormierunt in Domino. Ipse autem Uilbrord, cognomento Clemens, adhuc superest, longa iam uenerabilis aetate, utpote tricesimum et sextum in episcopatu habens annum, et post multiplices militiae caelestis agones ad praemia remunerationis supernae tota mente suspirans.

[12] His temporibus miraculum memorabile et antiquorum simile in Britannia factum est. Namque ad excitationem uiuentium de morte animae, quidam aliquandiu mortuus ad uitam resurrexit corporis, et multa memoratu digna, quae uiderat, narrauit; e quibus hic aliqua breuiter perstringenda esse putauit. Erat ergo pater familias in regione Nordanhymbrorum, quae uocatur Incuneningum, religiosam cum domu sua gerens uitam; qui infirmitate corporis tactus, et hac crescente per dies, ad extrema perductus, primo tempore noctis defunctus est; sed diluculo reuiuiscens, ac repente residens, omnes, qui corpori flentes adsederant, timore immenso perculsos in fugam conuertit; uxor tantum, quae amplius amabat, quamuis multum tremens et pauida, remansit. Quam ille consolatus: ‘Noli,’ inquit, ‘timere, quia iam uere surrexi a morte, qua tenebar, et apud homines sum iterum uiuere permissus; non tamen ea mihi, qua ante consueam, conuersatione, sed multum dissimili ex hoc tempore uiuendum est.’

Statimque surgens, abiit ad uillulae oratorium, et usque ad diem in oratione persistens, mox omnem, quam possederat, substantiam in tres diuisit portiones, e quibus unam coniugi, alteram filiis tradidit, tertiam sibi ipse retentans, statim pauperibus distribuit. Nec multo post saeculi curis absolutus ad monasterium Mailros, quod Tuidi fluminis circumflexu maxima ex parte clauditur, peruenit; acceptaque tonsura, locum secretae mansionis, quam praeuiderat abbas, intrauit;

et ibi usque ad diem mortis in tanta mentis et corporis contritione durauit, ut multa illum, quae alios laterent, uel horrenda uel desideranda uidisse, etiamsi lingua sileret, uita loqueretur.

Narrabat autem hoc modo, quod uiderat: ‘Lucidus,’ inquiens, ‘aspectu et clarus erat indumento, qui me ducebat. Incedebamus autem tacentes, ut uidebatur mihi, contra ortum solis solstitialem; cumque ambularem, deuenimus ad uallem multae latitudinis ac profunditatis, infinitae autem longitudinis; quae ad leuam nobis sita, unum latus flammis feruentibus nimium terribile, alterum furenti grandine ac frigore niuium omnia perflante atque uerrente non minus intolerabile praeferebat. Utrumque autem erat

animabus hominum plenum, quae uicissim huc inde uidebantur quasi tempestatis impetu iactari. Cum enim uim feruoris inmensi tolerare non possent, prosiliebant miserae in medium rigoris infesti; et cum neque ibi quippiam requiei inuenire ualerent, resiliebant rursus urendae in medium flammarum inextinguibilium. Cumque hac infelici uicissitudine longe lateque, prout aspicere poteram, sine ulla quietis intercapedine innumerabilis spirituum deformium multitudo torqueretur, cogitare coepi, quod hic fortasse esset infernus, de cuius tormentis intolerabilibus narrari saepius audiui. Respondit cogitationi meae ductor, qui me praecedebat: “Non hoc,”

inquiens, “suspiceris; non enim hic infernus est ille, quem putas.”

‘At cum me hoc spectaculo tam horrendo perterritum paulatim in ulteriora produceret, uidi subito ante nos obscurari incipere loca, et tenebris omnia repleri. Quas cum intraremus, in tantum paulisper condensatae sunt, ut nihil praeter ipsas aspicerem, excepta dumtaxat specie et ueste eius, qui me ducebat. Et cum progredieremur ‘sola sub nocte per umbras,’ ecce subito apparent ante nos crebri flammarum tetrae globi, ascendentes quasi de puteo magno, rursumque decedentes in eundem. Quo cum perductus essem, repente ductor meus disparuit, ac me solum in medio tenebrarum et horridae uisionis reliquit. At cum idem globi ignium sine intermissione modo alta peterent, modo ima baratri repeterent, cerno omnia, quae ascendebant, fastigia flammarum plena esse spiritibus hominum, qui instar fauillarum cum fumo ascendentium, nunc ad sublimiora proicerentur, nunc retractis ignium uaporibus relaberentur in profunda. Sed et fetor incomparabilis cum eisdem uaporibus ebulliens omnia illa tenebrarum loca replebat. Et cum diutius ibi pauidus consisterem, utpote incertus, quid agerem, quo uerterem gressum, qui me finis maneret; audio subitum post terga sonitum inmanissimi fletus ac miserrimi, simul et cachinnum crepitantem quasi uulgi indocti captis hostibus insultantis. Ut autem sonitus idem clarior redditus ad me usque peruenit, considero turbam malignorum spirituum, quae quinque animas hominum merentes heulantesque, ipsa multum exultans et cachinnans, medias illas trahebat in tenebras; e quibus uidelicet hominibus, ut dinoscere potui, quidam erat adtonsus ut clericus, quidam laicus, quaedam femina. Trahentes autem eos maligni spiritus descenderunt in medium baratri illius ardentis;

factumque est, ut cum longius subeuntibus eis, fletum hominum et risum daemoniorum clare discernere nequirem, sonum tamen adhuc promiscuum in auribus haberem. Interea ascenderunt quidam spirituum obscurorum de abyso illa flammium, et adcurrentes circumdederunt me, atque oculis flammantibus, et de ore ac naribus ignem putidum efflantes angebant; forcipibus quoque igneis, quos tenebant in manibus, minitabantur me comprehendere, nec tamen me ullatenus contingere, tametsi terrere praesumebant. Qui cum undique uersum hostibus et caecitate tenebrarum conclusus, huc illucque oculos circumferrem, si forte alicunde quid auxilii, quo saluarer, adueniret, apparuit retro uia, qua ueneram, quasi fulgor stellae micantis inter tenebras, qui paulatim crescens, et ad me ocus festinans, ubi

adpropinquauit, dispersi sunt et aufugerunt omnes, qui me forcipibus rapere quaerebant spiritus infesti.

‘Ille autem, qui adueniens eos fugauit, erat ipse, qui me ante ducebat; qui mox conuersus ad dextrum iter, quasi contra ortum solis brumalem me ducere coepit. Nec mora, exemptum tenebris in auras me serenae lucis eduxit; cumque me in luce aperta duceret, uidi ante nos murum permaximum, cuius neque longitudini hinc uel inde, neque altitudini ullus esse terminus uideretur. Coepi autem mirari, quare ad murum accederemus, cum in eo nullam ianuam, uel fenestram, uel ascensum alicubi conspicerem. Cum ergo peruenissemus ad murum, statim nescio quo ordine fuimus in summitate eius. Et ecce ibi campus erat latissimus ac laetissimus, tantaque flagrantia uernantium flosculorum plenus, ut omnem mox fetorem tenebrosi fornacis, qui me peruaserat, effugaret admirandi huius suauitas odoris. Tanta autem lux cuncta ea loca perfuderat, ut omni splendore diei siue solis meridiani radiis uideretur esse praeclarior.

Erantque in hoc campo innumera hominum albatorum conuenticula, sedesque plurimae agminum laetantium. Cumque inter choros felicitum incolarum medios me duceret, cogitare coepi, quod hoc fortasse esset regnum caelorum, de quo praedicari saepius audiui. Respondit ille cogitatu meo: “Non,” inquit, “non hoc est regnum caelorum, quod autumas.”

‘Cumque procedentes transissemus et has beatorum mansiones spirituum, aspicio ante nos multo maiorem luminis gratiam quam prius; in qua etiam uocem cantantium dulcissimam audiui; sed et odoris flagrantia miri tanta de loco effundebatur, ut is, quem antea degustans quasi maximum rebar, iam permodicus mihi odor uideretur; sicut etiam lux illa campi florentis eximia, in comparatione eius, quae nunc apparuit, lucis, tenuissima prorsus uidebatur, et parua. In cuius amoenitatem loci cum nos intraturos sperarem, repente ductor substitit; nec mora, gressum retorquens ipsa me, qua uenimus, uia reduxit.

‘Cumque reuersi perueniremus ad mansiones illas laetas spirituum candidatorum, dixit mihi: “Scis, quae sint ista omnia, quae uidisti?” Respondi ego: “Non.” Et ait: “Uallis illa, quam aspexisti flammis feruentibus et frigoribus horrenda rigidis, ipse est locus, in quo examinandae et castigandae sunt animae illorum, qui differentes confiteri et emendare scelera, quae fecerunt, in ipso tandem mortis articulo ad paenitentiam confugiunt, et sic de corpore exeunt; qui tamen, quia confessionem et paenitentiam uel in morte habuerunt, omnes in die iudicii ad regnum caelorum perueniunt.

Multos autem preces uiuentium, et elimosynae, et ieiunia, et maxime celebratio missarum, ut etiam ante diem iudicii liberentur, adiuant. Porro puteus ille flammium ac putidus, quem uidisti, ipsum est os gehennae, in quo quicumque semel inciderit, numquam inde liberabitur in aeuum. Locus uero iste florifer, in quo pulcherrimam hanc iuuentutem iucundari ac fulgere conspicias, ipse est, in quo recipiuntur animae eorum, qui in bonis quidem operibus de corpore exeunt; non tamen sunt tantae perfectionis, ut in regnum caelorum statim mereantur introduci; qui tamen omnes in die iudicii ad

uisionem Christi, et gaudia regni caelestis intrabunt. Nam quicumque in omni uerbo, et opere, et cogitatione perfecti sunt, mox de corpore egressi ad regnum caeleste perueniunt; ad cuius uicina pertinet locus ille, ubi sonum cantilenae dulcis cum odore suauitatis ac splendore lucis audisti. Tu autem, quia nunc ad corpus reuerti, et rursum inter homines uiuere debes, si actus tuos curiosius discutere, et mores sermonesque tuos in rectitudine ac simplicitate seruare studueris, accipies et ipse post mortem locum mansionis inter haec, quae cernis, agmina laetabunda spirituum beatorum. Namque ego, cum ad tempus abscissem a te, ad hoc feci, ut, quid de te fieri deberet, agnoscerem.” Haec mihi cum dixisset, multum detestatus sum reuerti ad corpus, delectatus nimirum suauitate ac decore loci illius, quem intuebar, simul et consortio eorum, quos in illo uidebam. Nec tamen aliquid ductorem meum rogare audebam; sed inter haec nescio quo ordine repente me inter homines uiuere cerno.’

Haec et alia, quae uiderat, idem uir Domini, non omnibus passim desidiosius ac uitae suae incuriosis referre uolebat, sed illis solummodo, qui uel tormentorum metu perterriti, uel spe gaudiorum perennium delectati, profectum pietatis ex eius uerbis haurire uolebant. Denique in uicinia cellae illius habitabat quidam monachus, nomine Haemgils, presbyteratus etiam, quem bonis actibus adaequabat, gradu praeminens, qui adhuc superest, et in Hibernia insula solitarius ultimam uitae aetatem pane cibario et frigida aqua sustentat. Hic saepius ad eundem uirum ingrediens, audiuit ab eo repetita interrogatione, quae et qualia essent, quae exutus corpore uideret; per cuius relationem ad nostram quoque agnitionem peruenire, quae de his pauca perstrinximus. Narrabat autem uisiones suas etiam regi Aldfrido, uiro undecumque doctissimo; et tam libenter tamque studiose ab illo auditus est, ut eius rogatu monasterio supra memorato inditus, ac monachica sit tonsura coronatus, atque ad eum audiendum saepissime, cum illas in partes deuenisset, accederet. Cui uidelicet monasterio tempore illo religiosae ac modestae uitae abbas et presbyter Ediluald praeerat, qui nunc episcopalem Lindisfarnensis ecclesiae cathedram condignis gradu actibus seruat.

Accepit autem in eodem monasterio locum mansionis secretiorem, ubi liberius continuus in orationibus famulatus sui conditoris uacaret.

Et quia locus ipse super ripam fluminis erat situs, solebat hoc creber ob magnum castigandi corporis affectum ingredi, ac saepius in eo supermeantibus undis inmergi; sicque ibidem quamdiu sustinere posse uidebatur, psalmis uel precibus insistere, fixusque manere, ascendente aqua fluminis usque ad lumbos, aliquando et usque ad collum; atque inde egrediens ad terram, numquam ipsa uestimenta uda atque algida deponere curabat, donec ex suo corpore calefierent et sicarentur. Cumque tempore hiemali defluentibus circa eum semifractarum crustis glacierum, quas et ipse aliquando contriuerat, quo haberet locum standi siue inmergendi in fluuium, dicerent, qui uidebant: ‘Mirum, frater Drythelme,’ (hoc enim erat uiro nomen), ‘quod tantam frigoris asperitatem ulla ratione tolerare praeuales.’

Respondēbat ille simpliciter, erat namque homo simplicis ingenii, ac moderatae naturae: ‘Frigidiora ego uidi.’ Et cum dicerent: ‘Mirum, quod tam austeram tenere continentiam uelis.’

Respondēbat: ‘Austeriora ego uidi.’ Sicque usque ad diem suae uocationis infatigabili caelestium bonorum desiderio corpus senile inter cotidiana ieiunia domabat, multisque et uerbo et conuersatione saluti fuit.

[13] At contra fuit quidam in prouincia Merciorum, cuius uisiones ac uerba, non autem et conuersatio, plurimis, sed non sibimet ipsi, profuit. Fuit autem temporibus Coenredi, qui post Aedilredum regnauit, uir in laico habitu atque officio militari positus; sed quantum pro industria exteriori regi placens, tantum pro interna suimet neglegentia displicens. Ammonebat ergo illum sedulo, ut confiteretur, et emendaret, ac relinqueret scelera sua, priusquam subito mortis superuentu tempus omne paenitendi et emendandi perderet. Uerum ille, frequenter licet admonitus, spernebat uerba salutis, seseque tempore sequente paenitentiam acturum esse promittebat. Haec inter tactus infirmitate, decidit in lectum, atque acri coepit dolore torqueri. Ad quem ingressus rex, diligebat enim eum multum, hortabatur, ut uel tunc, antequam moreretur, paenitentiam ageret commissorum. At ille respondit, non se tunc uelle confiteri peccata sua, sed cum ab infirmitate resurgeret; ne exprobrarent sibi sodales, quod timore mortis faceret ea, quae sospes facere noluerat; fortiter quidem, ut sibi uidebatur, locutus, sed miserabiliter, ut post patuit, daemonica fraude seductus.

Cumque morbo ingrauescente, denuo ad eum uisitandum ac docendum rex intraret, clamabat statim miserabili uoce: ‘Quid uis modo? quid huc uenisti? non enim mihi aliquid utilitatis aut salutis potes ultra conferre.’ At ille: ‘Noli,’ inquit, ‘ita loqui, uide ut sanum sapias.’ ‘Non,’ inquit, ‘insanio, sed pessimam mihi scientiam certus prae oculis habeo.’ ‘Et quid,’ inquit, ‘hoc est?’ ‘Paulo ante,’

inquit, ‘intrauerunt domum hanc duo pulcherrimi iuuenes, et resederunt circa me, unus ad caput, et unus ad pedes; protulitque unus libellum perpulchrum, sed uehementer modicum, ac mihi ad legendum dedit; in quo omnia, quae umquam bona feceram, intuens scripta repperi, et haec erant nimium pauca et modica. Receperunt codicem, neque aliquid mihi dicebant. Tum subito superuenit exercitus malignorum et horridorum uultu spirituum, domumque hanc et exterius obsedit, et intus maxima ex parte residens impleuit. Tunc ille, qui et obscuritate tenebrosae faciei, et primatu sedis maior esse uidebatur eorum, proferens codicem horrendae uisionis, et magnitudinis enormis, et ponderis pene inportabilis, iussit uni ex satellitibus suis mihi ad legendum deferre. Quem cum legissem, inueni omnia scelera, non solum quae opere uel uerbo, sed etiam quae tenuissima cogitatione peccaui, manifestissime in eo tetricis esse descripta litteris. Dicebatque ad illos, qui mihi adsederant, uiros albatos et praeclaros: “Quid hic sedetis, scientes certissime, quia noster est iste?” Responderunt: “Uerum dicitis: accipite et in cumulum damnationis uestrae ducite.” Quo dicto statim disparuerunt;

surgentesque duo nequissimi spiritus, habentes in manibus uomeres, percusserunt me, unus in capite et alius in pede: qui uidelicet modo cum magno tormento inrepunt in interiora corporis mei, moxque ut ad se inuicem perueniunt, moriar, et paratis ad rapiendum me daemonibus in inferni claustra pertrahar.’

Sic loquebatur miser desperans, et non multo post defunctus, paenitentiam, quam ad breue tempus cum fructu ueniae facere supersedit, in aeternum sine fructu poenis subditus facit. De quo constat, quia, sicut beatus papa Gregorius de quibusdam scribit, non pro se ista, cui non profuere, sed pro aliis uiderit, qui eius interitum cognoscentes differre tempus paenitentiae, dum uacat, timerent, ne inprouiso mortis articulo praeuerti, inpaenitentes perirent. Quod autem codices diuersos per bonos siue malos spiritus sibi uidit offerri, ob id superna dispensatione factum est, ut meminerimus facta et cogitationes nostras non in uentum diffluere, sed ad examen summi Iudicis cuncta seruari; et siue per amicos angelos in fine nobis ostendenda, siue per hostes. Quod uero prius candidum codicem protulerunt angeli, deinde atrum daemones; illi perparuum, isti enormem; animaduertendum est, quod in prima aetate bona aliqua fecit, quae tamen uniuersa praue agendo iuuenis obnubilauit. Qui si e contrario errores pueritiae corrigere in adulescentia, ac bene faciendo a Dei oculis abscondere curasset, posset eorum numero sociari, de quibus ait psalmus: ‘Beati, quorum remissae sunt iniquitates, et quorum tecta sunt peccata.’ Hanc historiam, sicut a uenerabili antistite Pecthelmo didici, simpliciter ob salutem legentium siue audientium narrandam esse putauit.

[14] Novi autem ipse fratrem, quem utinam non nossem, cuius etiam nomen, si hoc aliquid prodesset, dicere possem; positum in monasterio nobili, sed ipsum ignobiliter uiuentem. Corripiebatur quidem sedulo a fratribus ac maioribus loci, atque ad castigationem uitam conuerti ammonebatur. Et quamuis eos audire noluisset, tolerabatur tamen ab eis longanimitate ob necessitatem operum ipsius exteriorum; erat enim fabrilis arte singularis. Seruebat autem multum ebrietati, et ceteris uitae remissioris inlecebris; magisque in officina sua die noctuque residere, quam ad psallendum atque orandum in ecclesia, audiendumque cum fratribus uerbum uitae concurrere consuebat. Unde accidit illi, quod solent dicere quidam, quia, qui non uult ecclesiae ianuam sponte humiliatus ingredi, necesse habet in ianuam inferni non sponte damnatus introduci.

Percussus enim langore, atque ad extrema perductus, uocauit fratres, et multum merens ac damnato similis coepit narrare, quia uideret inferos apertos, et Satanam demersum in profundis tartari, Caiphanque cum ceteris, qui occiderunt Dominum, iuxta eum flammis ultricibus contraditum: ‘in quorum uicinia,’ inquit, ‘heu misero mihi locum despicio aeternae perditionis esse praeparatum.’

Audientes haec fratres coeperunt diligenter exhortari, ut uel tunc positus adhuc in corpore, paenitentiam faceret. Respondebat ille desperans: ‘Non est mihi modo tempus uitam mutandi, cum ipse uiderim iudicium meum iam esse

completum.'

Talia dicens, sine uiatico salutis obiit, et corpus eius in ultimis est monasterii locis humatum, neque aliquis pro eo uel missas facere, uel psalmos cantare, uel saltem orare praesumebat. O quam grandi distantia diuisit Deus inter lucem et tenebras! Beatus protomartyr Stephanus passurus mortem pro ueritate, uidit caelos apertos, uidit gloriam Dei et Iesum stantem a dextris Dei; et ubi erat futurus ipse post mortem, ibi oculos mentis ante mortem, quo laetior occumberet, misit. At contra, faber iste tenebrosae mentis et actionis, imminente morte, uidit aperta tartara, uidit damnationem diaboli et sequacium eius; uidit etiam suum infelix inter tales carcerem, quo miserabilius ipse desperata salute periret, sed uiuentibus, qui haec cognouissent, causam salutis sua perditione relinqueret. Factum est hoc nuper in prouincia Berniciorum; ac longe lateque diffamatum, multos ad agendam et non differendam scelerum suorum paenitudinem prouocauit. Quod utinam exhinc etiam nostrarum lectione litterarum fiat!

[15] Quo tempore plurima pars Scottorum in Hibernia, et nonnulla etiam de Bretonibus in Britania, rationabile et ecclesiasticum paschalis obseruantiae tempus Domino donante suscepit. Siquidem Adamnan, presbyter et abbas monachorum, qui erant in insula Hii, cum legationis gratia missus a sua gente, uenisset ad Aldfridum, regem Anglorum, et aliquandiu in ea prouincia moratus uideret ritus ecclesiae canonicos; sed et a pluribus, qui erant eruditiores, esset solerter admonitus, ne contra uniuersalem ecclesiae morem uel in obseruantia paschali, uel in aliis quibusque decretis cum suis paucissimis et in extremo mundi angulo positus uiuere praesumeret, mutatus mente est; ita ut ea, quae uiderat et audierat in ecclesiis Anglorum, suae suorumque consuetudini libentissime praeferret. Erat enim uir bonus, et sapiens, et scientia scripturarum nobilissime instructus.

Qui cum domum redisset, curauit suos, qui erant in Hii, quiue eidem erant subditi monasterio, ad eum, quem cognouerat, quemque ipse toto ex corde susceperat, ueritatis callem perducere, nec ualuit.

Nauigauit Hiberniam, et praedicans eis, ac modesta exhortatione declarans legitimum paschae tempus, plurimos eorum, et pene omnes, qui ab Hiensium dominio erant liberi, ab errore auito correctos, ad unitatem reduxit catholicam, ac legitimum paschae tempus obseruare perdocuit. Qui cum celebrato in Hibernia canonico pascha, ad suam insulam reuertisset, suoque monasterio catholicam temporis paschalis obseruantiam instantissime praedicaret, nec tamen perficere, quod conabatur, posset, contigit eum ante expletum anni circulum migrasse de saeculo. Diuina utique gratia disponente, ut uir unitatis ac pacis studiosissimus ante ad uitam raperetur aeternam, quam redeunte tempore paschali, grauiorem cum eis, qui eum ad ueritatem sequi nolebant, cogeretur habere discordiam.

Scripsit idem uir de locis sanctis librum legentibus multis utillimum; cuius auctor erat docendo ac dictando Galliarum episcopus Arcuulfus, qui locorum gratia sanctorum uenerat Hierosolimam, et lustrata omni terra repromissionis,

Damascus quoque, Constantinopolim, Alexandriam, multas maris insulas adierat;

patriamque nauigio reuertens, ui tempestatis in occidentalia Britanniae litora delatus est; ac post multa ad memoratum Christi famulum Adamnanum perueniens, ubi doctus in scripturis, sanctorumque locorum gnarus esse conpertus est, libentissime est ab illo susceptus, libentius auditus; adeo ut, quaeque ille se in locis sanctis memoratu digna uidisse testabatur, cuncta mox iste litteris mandare curauerit. Fecitque opus, ut dixi, multis utile, et maxime illis, qui longius ab eis locis, in quibus patriarchae uel apostoli erant, secreti, ea tantum de his, quae lectione didicerint, norunt.

Porrexit autem librum hunc Adamnan Aldfrido regi, ac per eius est largitionem etiam minoribus ad legendum contraditus. Scriptor quoque ipse multis ab ea muneribus donatus patriam remissus est. De cuius scriptis aliqua decerpere, ac nostrae huic historiae inserere commodum fore legentibus reor.

[16] Sciosit ergo de loco dominicae natiuitatis in hunc modum:

— Bethleem ciuitas Dauid in dorso sita est angusto ex omni parte uallibus circumdato, ab occidente in orientem mille passibus longa, humili sine turribus muro per extrema plani uerticis instructo; in cuius orientali angulo quasi quoddam naturale semiantrum est, cuius exterior pars natiuitatis dominicae fuisse dicitur locus; interior Praesepe Domini nominatur. Haec spelunca tota interius pretioso marmore tecta supra locum, ubi Dominus natus specialius traditur, sanctas Mariae grandem gestat ecclesiam.

Scripsit item hoc modo de loco passionis ac resurrectionis illius:

— ‘Ingressis a septentrionali parte urbem Hierosolymam, primum de locis sanctis pro condicione platearum diuertendum est ad ecclesiam Constantinianam, quae Martyrium appellatur. Hanc Constantinus imperator, eo quod ibi crux Domini ab Helena matre reperta sit, magnifico et regio cultu construxit. Dehinc ab occasu Golgothana uidetur ecclesia, in qua etiam rupis apparet illa, quae quondam ipsam adfixo Domini corpore crucem pertulit, argenteam modo pergrandem sustinens crucem, pendente magna desuper aerea rota cum lampadibus. Infra ipsum uero locum dominicae crucis, excisa in petra crypta est, in qua super altare pro defunctis honoratis sacrificium solet offerri, positis interim in platea corporibus. Huius quoque ad occasum ecclesiae, Anastasis, hoc est resurrectionis dominicae rotunda ecclesia, tribus cincta parietibus, XII columnis sustentatur, inter parietes singulos latum habens spatium uiae, quae tria altaria in tribus locis parietis medii continet, hoc est australi, aquilonali, et occidentali. Haec bis quaternas portas, id est introitus, per tres e regione parietes habet, e quibus III ad Uulturnum, et III ad Eurum spectant. Huius in medio monumentum Domini rotundum petra excisum est, cuius culmen intrinsecus stans homo manu contingere potest, ab oriente habens introitum, cui lapis ille magnus adpositus est; quod intrinsecus ferramentorum uestigia usque in praesens ostendit. Nam extrinsecus usque ad culminis summitatem totum marmore tectum est. Summum uero culmen auro ornatum auream magnam gestat crucem. In huius ergo monumenti Aquilonali

parte sepulchrum Domini in eadem petra excisum, longitudinis VII pedum, trium mensura palmarum pauimento altius eminet; introitum habens a latere meridiano, ubi die noctuque XII lampades ardent, IIII intra sepulchrum, VIII supra in margine dextro. Lapis, qui ad ostium monumenti positus erat, nunc fissus est; cuius pars minor quadratum altare ante ostium nihilominus eiusdem monumenti stat;

maior uero in orientali eiusdem ecclesiae loco quadrangulum aliud altare sub linteaminibus exstat. Color autem eiusdem monumenti et sepulchri albo et rubicundo permixtus uidetur.

[17] De loco quoque ascensionis dominicae praefatus auctor hoc modo refert: — Mons Oliuarum altitudine monti Sion par est, sed latitudine et longitudine praestat; exceptis uitis et oliuis, rarae ferax arboris, frumenti quoque et hordei fertilis. Neque enim brucosa, sed herbosa et florida soli illius est qualitas; in cuius summo uertice, ubi Dominus ad caelos ascendit, ecclesia rotunda grandis, ternas per circuitum cameratas habet porticus desuper tectas. Interior namque domus propter dominici corporis meatum camerari et tegi non potuit;

altare ad orientem habens angusto culmine protectum, in cuius medio ultima Domini uestigia, caelo desuper patente, ubi ascendit, uisuntur. Quae cum cotidie a credentibus terra tollatur, nihilominus manet, eandemque adhuc speciem ueluti inpressis signata uestigiis seruat. Haec circa aerea rota iacet, usque ad ceruicem alta, ab occasu habens introitum, pendente desuper in trocleis magna lampade, totaque die et nocte lucente. In occidentali eiusdem ecclesiae parte fenestrae octo, totidemque e regione lampades in funibus pendentes usque Hierosolymam per utrum fulgent; quarum lux corda intuentium cum quadam alacritate et conpunctione pauefacere dicitur. In die ascensionis dominicas per annos singulos, missa peracta, ualidi flaminis procella desursum uenire consueuit, et omnes, qui in ecclesia adfuerint, terrae prosternere.

De situ etiam Chebron et monumentis patrum ita scribit: — Chebron quondam ciuitas et metropolis regni Daud, nunc ruinis tantum, quid tunc fuerit, ostendens. Uno ad orientem stadio speluncam duplicem in ualle habet, ubi sepulchra patriarcharum quadrato muro circumdantur, capitibus uersis ad Aquilonem; et haec singula singulis tecta lapidibus instar basilicae dolatis; trium patriarcharum candidis, Adam obscurioris et uilioris operis, qui haud longe ab illis ad borealem extremamque muri illius partem pausat. Trium quoque feminarum uiliores et minores memoriae cernuntur. Mamre collis mille passibus a monumentis his ad Boream, herbosus ualde et floridus, campestem habens in uertice planitiem; in cuius aquilonali parte quercus Abrahae duorum hominum altitudinis truncus ecclesia circumdata est.

Haec de opusculis excerpta praefati scriptoris ad sensum quidem uerborum illius, sed breuioribus strictisque comprehensa sermonibus, nostris ad utilitatem legentium historiis indere placuit. Plura uoluminis illius, siqui scire delectat, uel in ipso illo uolumine, uel in eo, quod de illo dudum strictim

excerpsimus, epitomate requirat.

[18] Anno dominicae incarnationis DCCV Aldfrid, rex Nordanhymbrorum, defunctus est, anno regni sui XXo necdum inpleto;

cui succedens in imperium filius suus Osred, puer octo circiter annorum, regnavit annis XI. Huius regni principio antistes Occidentalium Saxonum Haeddi caelestem migravit ad uitam. Bonus quippe erat uir, ac iustus, et episcopalem uitam siue doctrinam magis insito sibi uirtutum amore quam lectionibus institutus exercebat. Denique reuerentissimus antistes Pecthelm, de quo in sequentibus suo loco dicendum est, qui cum successore eius Aldhelmo multo tempore adhuc diaconus siue monachus fuit, referre est solitus, quod in loco, quo defunctus est, ob meritum sanctitatis eius multa sanitatum sint patrata miracula, hominesque prouinciae illius solitos ablatum inde puluerem propter languentes in aquam mittere, atque huius gustum siue aspersionem multis sanitatem egrotis et hominibus et pecoribus conferre; propter quod frequenti ablatione pulueris sacri fossa sit ibidem facta non minima.

Quo defuncto, episcopatus prouinciae illius in duas parrochias diuisus est. Una data Daniheli, quam usque hodie regit; altera Aldhelmo, cui annis IIII strenuissime praefuit; ambo et in rebus ecclesiasticis, et in scientia scripturarum sufficienter instructi.

Denique Aldhelm, cum adhuc esset presbyter et abbas monasterii, quod 'Maildufi urbem' nuncupant, scripsit, iubente synodo suae gentis, librum egregium aduersus errorem Bretonum, quo uel pascha non suo tempore celebrant, uel alia perplura ecclesiasticae castitati et paci contraria gerunt, multosque eorum, qui Occidentalibus Saxonibus subditi erant Brettones, ad catholicam dominici paschae celebrationem huius lectione perduxit. Scripsit et de uirginitate librum eximium, quem in exemplum Sedulii geminato opere, et uersibus exametris, et prosa composuit. Scripsit et alia nonnulla, utpote uir undecumque doctissimus; nam et sermone nitidus, et scripturarum, ut dixi, tam liberalium quam ecclesiasticarum erat eruditione mirandus. Quo defuncto, pontificatum pro eo suscepit Fortheri, qui usque hodie superest; uir et ipse in scripturis sanctis multum eruditus.

Quibus episcopatum administrantibus statutum est synodali decreto, ut prouincia Australium Saxonum, quae eatenus ad ciuitatis Uentanae, cui tunc Danihel praeerat, parrochiam pertinebat, et ipsa sedem episcopalem, ac proprium haberet episcopum; consecratusque est eis primus antistes Eadberct, qui erat abbas monasterii beatae memoriae Uilfridi episcopi, quod dicitur Selaseu; quo defuncto, Eolla suscepit officium pontificatus. Ipso autem ante aliquot annos ex hac luce subtracto, episcopatus usque hodie cessauit.

[19] Anno autem imperii Osredi IIIIo, Coinred, qui regno Merciorum nobilissime tempore aliquanto praefuerat, nobilius multo regni scepra reliquit. Nam uenit Romam, ibique adtonsus, pontificatum habente Constantino, ac monachusfactus, ad limina apostolorum, in precibus, ieiuniis, et elemosynis usque ad diem permansit ultimum;

succedente in regnum Ceolredo filio Aedilredi, qui ante ipsum Coinredum idem regnum tenebat. Uenit autem cum illo et filius Sigheri regis Orientalium Saxonum, cuius supra meminimus, uocabulo Offa, iuuenis amantissimae aetatis et uenustatis, totaeque suae genti ad tenenda seruandaque regni sceptrā exoptatissimus. Qui pari ductus deuotione mentis, reliquit uxorem, agros, cognatos, et patriam propter Christum, et propter euangelium, ut in hac uita centuplum acciperet, et in saeculo uenturo uitam aeternam. Et ipse ergo, ubi ad loca sancta Romam peruenerunt, adtonsus, et in monachico uitam habitu complens, ad uisionem beatorum apostolorum in caelis diu desideratam peruenit.

Eodem sane anno, quo hi Britanniam reliquere, antistes eximius Uilfrid post XL et V annos accepti episcopatus diem clausit extremum in prouincia, quae uocatur Inundalum; corpusque eius loculo inditum, perlatum est in monasterium ipsius, quod dicitur Inhrypum, et iuxta honorem tanto pontifici congruum in ecclesia beati apostoli Petri sepultum. De cuius statu uitae, ut ad priora repedantes, paucis, quae sunt gesta, memoremus, cum esset puer bonae indolis, atque aetatem moribus transiens, ita se modeste et circumspecte in omnibus gereret, ut merito a maioribus quasi unus ex ipsis amaretur, ueneraretur, amplecteretur, ubi XIIIum aetatis contigit annum, monasticam saeculari uitam praetulit. Quod ubi patrisuo narrauit, iam enim mater obierat, libenter eius uotis ac desideriis caelestibus adnuit, eumque coeptis insistere salutaribus iussit.

Uenit ergo ad insulam Lindisfarnensem, ibique monachorum famulatui se contradens, diligenter ea, quae monasticae castitatis ac pietatis erant, et discere curabat et agere. Et quia acris erat ingenii, didicit citissime psalmos, et aliquot codices; necdum quidem adtonsus, uerum eis, quae tonsura maiores sunt, uirtutibus, humilitatis et oboedientiae, non mediocriter insignitus; propter quod et a senioribus et coetaneis suis iusto colebatur affectu. In quo uidelicet monasterio cum aliquot annos Deo seruiret, animaduertit paulatim adulescens animi sagacis, minime perfectam esse uirtutis uiam, quae tradebatur a Scottis, proposuitque animo uenire Romam, et qui ad sedem apostolicam ritus ecclesiastici siue monasteriales seruarentur, uidere. Quod cum fratribus referret, laudauerunt eius propositum, eumque id, quod mente disposuerat, perficere suadebant. At ille confestim ueniens ad reginam Eanfledam, quia notus erat ei, eiusque consilio ac suffragiis praefato fuerat monasterio sociatus, indicauit ei desiderium sibi inesse beatorum apostolorum limina uisitandi; quae delectata bono adulescentis proposito, misit eum Cantiam ad regem Erconberctum, qui erat filius auunculi sui, postulans, ut eum honorifice Romam transmitteret. Quo tempore ibi gradum archiepiscopatus Honorius, unus ex discipulis beati papae Gregorii, uir in rebus ecclesiasticis sublimiter institutus seruabat. Ubi cum aliquandiu demoratus adulescens animi uiuacis diligenter his, quae inspiciebat, discendis operam daret, superuenit illo alius adulescens, nomine Biscop, cognomento Benedictus, de nobilibus Anglorum, cupiens et ipse Romam uenire;

cuius supra meminimus.

Huius ergo comitatus rex sociavit Uilfridum, utque illum secum Romam perduceret, iussit. Qui cum Lugdunum peruenissent, Uilfrid a Dalfino ciuitatis episcopo ibi retentus est, Benedictus coeptum iter nauiter Romam usque conpleuit. Delectabatur enim antistes prudentia uerborum iuuenis, gratia uenusti uultus, alacritate actionis, et constantia ac maturitate cogitationis. Unde et omnia, quae necesse habebat, habundanter ipsi cum sociis suis, quamdiu secum erant, donabat; et insuper offerebat, ut, si uellet, partem Galliarum non minimam illi regendam committeret, ac filiam fratris sui uirginem illi coniugem daret, eumque ipse loco adoptiui semper haberet. At ille gratias agens pietati, quam erga eum, cum esset peregrinus, habere dignaretur, respondit propositum se magis alterius conuersationis habere, atque ideo, patria relictâ, Romam iter agere coepisse.

Quibus auditis antistes misit eum Romam, dato duce itineris, et cunctis simul, quae necessitas poscebat itineris, largiter subministratis; obsecrans sedulo, ut, cum patriam reuerteretur, per se iter facere meminisset. Ueniens uero Romam, et orationibus ac meditationi rerum ecclesiasticarum, ut animo proposuerat, cotidiana mancipatus instantia, peruenit ad amicitiam uiri sanctissimi ac doctissimi, Bonifatii uidelicet archidiaconi, qui etiam consiliarius erat apostolici papae; cuius magisterio IIII euangeliorum libros ex ordine didicit, computum paschae rationabilem, et alia multa, quae in patria nequieverat, ecclesiasticis disciplinis accommoda, eodem magistro tradente percepit; et cum menses aliquot ibi studiis occupatus felicibus exegisset, rediit ad Dalfinum in Galliam, et III annos apud eum commoratus, adtonsus est ab eo, et in tanto habitus amore, ut heredem sibi illum facere cogitasset. Sed ne hoc fieri posset, antistes crudeli morte praereptus est, et Uilfrid ad suae potius, hoc est Anglorum, gentis episcopatum reseruatus. Namque Baldhild regina missis militibus episcopum iussit interfici; quem ad locum quidem, quo decollandus erat, secutus est Uilfrid clericus illius, desiderans cum eo, tametsi ipso multum prohibente, pariter occumbere. Sed hunc ubi peregrinum atque oriundum de natione Anglorum cognouere carnifices, pepercere illi, neque eum trucidare cum suo uoluerunt pontifice.

At ille Britanniam ueniens, coniunctus est amicitia Alchfridi regis, qui catholicas ecclesiae regulas sequi semper, et amare didicerat. Unde et ille, quia catholicum eum esse conperiit, mox donauit terram X familiarum in loco, qui dicitur Stanford, et non multo post monasterium XXX familiarum in loco, qui uocatur Inhrypum;

quem uidelicet locum dederat pridem ad construendum inibi monasterium his, qui Scottos sequebantur. Uerum quia illi postmodum optione data maluerunt loco cedere, quam pascha catholicum, ceterosque ritus canonicos iuxta Romanae et apostolicae ecclesiae consuetudinem recipere, dedit hoc illi, quem melioribus inbutum disciplinis ac moribus uidit.

Quo in tempore, ad iussionem praefati regis presbyter ordinatus est in eodem monasterio ab Agilbercto episcopo Geuissorum, cuius supra

meminimus, desiderante rege, ut uir tantae eruditionis ac religionis sibi specialiter indiuiduo comitatu sacerdos esset, ac doctor. Quem non multo post, detecta et eliminata, ut et supra docuimus, Scottorum secta, Galliam mittens, cum consilio atque consensu patris sui Osuii, episcopum sibi rogauit ordinari, cum esset annorum circiter XXX, eodem Agilbercto tunc episcopatum agente Parisiaca ciuitatis; cum quo et alii XI episcopi ad dedicationem antistitis conuenientes, multum honorifice ministerium impleuerunt. Quo adhuc in transmarinis partibus demorante, consecratus est in episcopatum Eboraci, iubente rege Osuio, Ceadda uir sanctus, ut supra memoratum est, et tribus annis ecclesiam sublimiter regens, dehinc ad monasterii sui, quod est in Lastingai, curam secessit, accipiente Uilfrido episcopatum totius Nordanhymbrorum prouinciae.

Qui deinde regnante Ecgrido, pulsus est episcopatu, et alii pro illo consecrati antistites, quorum supra meminimus; Romamque iturus, et coram apostolico papa causam dicturus, ubi nauem conscendit, flante Fauonio pulsus est Fresiam, et honorifice susceptus a barbaris ac rege illorum Aldgilso, praedicabat eis Christum, et multa eorum milia uerbo ueritatis instituens, a peccatorum suorum sordibus fonte Saluatoris abluit; et quod postmodum Uilbrord, reuerentissimus Christi pontifex, in magna deuotione conpleuit, ipse primus ibi opus euangelicum coepit. Ibi ergo hiemem cum noua Dei plebe feliciter exigens, sic Romam ueniendi iter repetiit; et ubi causa eius uentilata est, praesente Agathone papa et pluribus episcopis, uniuersorum iudicio absque crimine accusatus fuisse, et episcopatu esse dignus inuentus est.

Quo in tempore idem papa Agatho, cum synodum congregaret Romae CXXV episcoporum, aduersus eos, qui unam in Domino Saluatore uoluntatem atque operationem dogmatizabant, uocari iussit et Uilfridum, atque inter episcopos considentem dicere fidem suam, simul et prouinciae siue insulae, de qua uenerat. Cumque catholicus fide cum suis esset inuentus, placuit hoc inter cetera eiusdem synodi gestis inseri, scriptumque est hoc modo: 'Uilfridus Deo amabilis episcopus Eboracae ciuitatis, apostolicam sedem de sua causa appellans, et ab hac potestate de certis incertisque rebus absolutus, et cum aliis CXXV coepiscopis in synodo in iudicii sede constitutus, et pro omni aquilonali parte Britanniae et Hiberniae, insulis [que] quae ab Anglorum, et Brettonum, nec non Scottorum et Pictorum gentibus incoluntur, ueram et catholicam fidem confessus est, et cum subscriptione sua corroborauit.'

Post haec reuersus Britanniam prouinciam Australium Saxonum ab idolatriae ritibus ad Christi fidem conuertit. Uectae quoque insulae uerbi ministros destinauit; et secundo anno Aldfridi, qui post Ecgridum regnauit, sedem suam et episcopatum ipso rege inuitante recepit. Sed post V annos denuo accusatus, ab eodem ipso rege et plurimis episcopis praesulatu pulsus est; ueniensque Romam, cum praesentibus accusatoribus acciperet locum se defendendi, considentibus episcopis pluribus cum apostolico papa Iohanne, omnium iudicio probatum est accusatores eius non nulla in parte falsas contra eum machinasse calumnias; scriptumque a praefato papa regibus Anglorum

Aedilredo et Aldfrido, ut eum in episcopatum suum, eo quod iniuste fuerit condemnatus, facerent recipi.

Iuuit autem causam absolutionis eius lectio synodi beatae memoriae papae Agathonis, quae quondam ipso praesente in urbe atque in eodem concilio inter episcopos residente, ut praediximus, acta est. Cum ergo causa exigente synodus eadem coram nobilibus et frequentia populi, iubente apostolico papa, diebus aliquot legeretur, uentum est ad locum, ubi scriptum erat: ‘Uilfridus Deo amabilis episcopus Eboracae ciuitatis, apostolicam sedem de sua causa appellans, et ab hac potestate de certis incertisque rebus absolutus,’ et cetera, quae supra posuimus. Quod ubi lectum est, stupor adprehendit audientes; et silente lectore coeperunt alterutrum requirere, quis esset ille Uilfridus episcopus. Tum Bonifatius consiliarius apostolici papae, et alii perplures, qui eum temporibus Agathonis papae ibi uiderant dicebant ipsum esse episcopum, qui nuper Romam accusatus a suis, atque ab apostolica sede iudicandus aduenerit: ‘qui iamdudum,’ inquiunt, ‘aeque accusatus huc adueniens, mox audita ac diiudicata causa et controuersia utriusque partis, a beatae memoriae papa Agathone probatus est contra fas a suo episcopatu repulsus; et tanti apud eum habitus est, ut ipsum in concilio, quod congregarat, episcoporum, quasi uirum incorruptae fidei, et animi probi residere praeciperet.’ Quibus auditis dicebant omnes una cum ipso pontifice, uirum tantae auctoritatis, qui per XL prope annos episcopatu fungebatur, nequaquam damnari debere, sed ad integrum culpis accusationum absolutum patriam cum honore reuerti.

Qui cum Britanniam remeans in Galliarum partes deuenisset, tactus est infirmitate repentina, et ea crescente adeo pressus, ut neque equo uchi posset, sed manibus ministrorum portaretur in grabato. Sic delatus in Maeldum ciuitatem Galliae IIII diebus ac noctibus quasi mortuus iacebat, halitu tantum pertenui, quia uiueret, demonstrans.

Cumque ita sine cibo et potu, sine uoce et auditu, quadriduo perseueraret, quinta demum inlucescente die, quasi de graui experrectus somno, exsurgens resedit; apertisque oculis uidit circa se choros psallentium simul et flentium fratrum; ac modicum suspirans interrogauit, ubi esset Acca presbyter; qui statim uocatus intrauit, et uidens eum melius habentem, ac loqui iam ualentem, flexis genibus gratias egit Deo cum omnibus, qui aderant, fratribus.

Et cum parum consedissent, ac de supernis iudiciis trepidi aliqua confabulari coepissent, iussit pontifex ceteros ad horam egredi, et ad Accan presbyterum ita loqui exorsus est:

‘Uisio mihi modo tremenda apparuit, quam te audire ac silentio tegere uolo, donec sciam, quid de me fieri uelit Deus. Adstitit enim mihi quidam candido praeclarus habitu, dicens se Michaelem esse archangelum: “et ob hoc,” inquit, “missus sum, ut te a morte reuocem; donauit enim tibi Dominus uitam per orationes ac lacrimas discipulorum ac fratrum tuorum, et per intercessionem beatae suae genetricis semperque uirginis Mariae. Quapropter dico tibi, quia modo quidem ab infirmitate hac sanaberis; sed paratus esto, quia post quadriennium reuertens uisitabo te; patriam uero perueniens,

maximam possessionum tuarum, quae tibi ablatae sunt, portionem recipies, atque in pace tranquilla uitam terminabis”.’ Conualuit igitur episcopus, cunctis gaudentibus, ac Deo gratias agentibus, coeptoque itinere Britanniam uenit.

Lectis autem epistulis, quas ab apostolico papa aduexerat, Berctuald archiepiscopus, et Aedilred quondam rex, tunc autem abbas, libentissime fauerunt; qui uidelicet Aedilred accitum ad se Coinredum, quem pro se regem fecerat, amicum episcopo fieri petiit, et inpetrauit. Sed Aldfrid Nordanhymbrorum rex eum suscipere contempsit, nec longo tempore superfuit; unde factum est, ut, regnante Osredo filio eius, mox synodo facta iuxta fluuium Nidd, post aliquantum utriusque partis conflictum, tandem cunctis fauentibus in praesulatum sit suae receptus ecclesiae. Sicque IIII annis, id est usque ad diem obitus sui, uitam duxit in pace.

Defunctus est autem in monasterio suo, quod habebat in prouincia Undalum sub regimine Cudualdi abbatis; et ministerio fratrum perlatus in primum suum monasterium, quod uocatur Inhrypum, positus est in ecclesia beati apostoli Petri iuxta altare ad Austrum, ut et supra docuimus; et hoc de illo supra epitaphium scriptum:

Uilfridus hic magnus requiescit corpore praesul, Hanc Domino qui aulam ductus pietatis amore Fecit, et eximio sacrauit nomine Petri, Cui clauis caeli Christus dedit arbiter orbis;

Atque auro ac Tyrio deuotus uestiit ostro. Quin etiam sublime crucis, radiante metallo, Hic posuit tropaeum, nec non et quattuor auro Scribi euangelii praecepit in ordine libros;

Ac thecam e rutilo his condignam condidit auro;

Paschalis qui etiam sollemnia tempora cursus Catholici ad iustum correxit dogma canonis, Quem statuere patres, dubioque errore remoto, Certa suae genti ostendit moderamina ritus;

Inque locis istis monachorum examina crebra Colligit, ac monitis cauit, quae regula patrum Sedulus instituit; multisque domique forisque Iactatus nimium per tempora longa periclis, Quindecies ternos postquam egit episcopus annos, Transiit, et gaudens caelestia regna petiuit.

Dona, Iesu, ut grex pastoris calle sequatur.

[20] Anno post obitum praefati patris proximo, id est quinto Osredi regis, reuerentissimus pater Hadrianus abbas, cooperator in uerbo Dei Theodori beatae memoriae episcopi, defunctus est, et in monasterio suo in ecclesia beatae Dei genetricis sepultus; qui est annus XLmus primus, ex quo a Uitaliano papa directus est cum Theodoro; ex quo autem Britanniam uenit, XXXIX. Cuius doctrinae simul et Theodori inter alia testimonium perhibet, quod Albinus discipulus eius, qui monasterio ipsius in regimine successit, in tantum studiis scripturarum institutus est, ut Grecam quidem linguam non parua ex parte, Latinam uero non minus quam Anglorum, quae sibi naturalis est, nouerit.

Suscepit uero pro Uilfrido episcopatum Hagustaldensis ecclesiae Acca

presbyter eius, uir et ipse strenuissimus, et coram Deo et hominibus magnificus; qui et ipsius ecclesiae suae, quae in beati Andreae apostoli honorem consecrata est, aedificium multifario decore ac mirificis ampliavit operibus. Dedit namque operam, quod et hodie facit, ut acquisitis undecumque reliquiis beatorum apostolorum et martyrum Christi, in uenerationem illorum poneret altaria, distinctis porticibus in hoc ipsum intra muros eiusdem ecclesiae, sed et historias passionis eorum, una cum ceteris ecclesiasticis uoluminibus, summa industria congregans, amplissimam ibi ac nobilissimam bibliothecam fecit, nec non et uasa sancta, et luminaria, aliaque huiusmodi, quae ad ornatum domus Dei pertinent, studiosissime parauit. Cantatorem quoque egregium, uocabulo Maban, qui a successoribus discipulorum beati papae Gregorii in Cantia fual cantandi sonos edoctus, ad se suosque instituendos accersit, ac per annos XII tenuit; quatinus et, quae illi non nouerant, carmina ecclesiastica doceret; et ea, quae quondam cognita longo usu uel neglegentia inueterare coeperunt, huius doctrina priscum renouarentur in statum. Nam et ipse episcopus Acca cantator erat peritissimus, quomodo etiam in litteris sanctis doctissimus, et in catholicae fidei confessione castissimus, in ecclesiasticae quoque institutionis regulis solertissimus exstiterat; et usquedum praemia piae deuotionis accipiat, existere non desistit; utpote qui a pueritia in clero sanctissimi ac Deo dilecti Bosa Eboracensis episcopi nutritus atque eruditus est; deinde ad Uilfridum episcopum spe melioris propositi adueniens, omnem in eius obsequio usque ad obitum illius expleuit aetatem; cum quo etiam Romam ueniens multa illic, quae in patria nequiuerat, ecclesiae sanctae institutis utilia didicit.

[21] Eo tempore Naiton rex Pictorum, qui septentrionales Britanniae plagas inhabitant, admonitus ecclesiasticarum frequenti meditatione scripturarum, abrenuntiavit errori, quo eatenus in obseruatione paschae cum sua gente tenebatur, et se suosque omnes ad catholicum dominicae resurrectionis tempus celebrandum perduxit. Quod ut facilius et maiore auctoritate perficeret, quaesiuit auxilium de gente Anglorum, quos iamdudum ad exemplum sanctae Romanae et apostolicae ecclesiae suam religionem instituisse cognouit. Siquidem misit legatarios ad uirum uenerabilem Ceolfriidum, abbatem monasterii beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, quod est ad ostium Uiuri amnis, et iuxta amnem Tinam, in loco, qui uocatur Ingyrium, cui ipse post Benedictum, de quo supra diximus, gloriosissime praefuit; postulans, ut exhortatorias sibi litteras mitteret, quibus potentius confutare posset eos, qui pascha non suo tempore obseruare praesumerent; simul et de tonsurae modo uel ratione, qua clericos insigniri deceret; excepto, quod etiam ipse in his non parua ex parte esset inbutus. Sed et architectos sibi mitti petiit, qui iuxta morem Romanorum ecclesiam de lapide in gente ipsius facerent, promittens hanc in honorem beati apostolorum principis dedicandam; se quoque ipsum cum suis omnibus morem sanctae Romanae et apostolicae ecclesiae semper imitaturum, in quantum dumtaxat tam longe a Romanorum loquella et natione segregati hunc ediscere potuissent. Cuius

religiosis uotis ac precibus fauens reuerentissimus abba Ceolfrid misit architectos, quos petebatur, misit illi et litteras scriptas in hunc modum:

‘Domino excellentissimo et gloriosissimo regi Naitano, Ceolfrid abbas in Domino salutem.

‘Catholicam sancti paschae obseruantiam, quam a nobis, rex Deo deuote, religioso studio quaesisti, promptissime ac libentissime tuo desiderio, iuxta quod ab apostolica sede didicimus, patefacere satagimus. Scimus namque caelitus sanctae ecclesiae donatum, quotiens ipsi rerum domini discendae, docendae, custodiendae ueritati operam inpendunt. Nam et uere omnino dixit quidam saecularium scriptorum, quia felicissimo mundus statu ageretur, si uel reges philosopharentur, uel regnarent philosophi. Quod si de philosophia huius mundi uere intellegere, de statu huius mundi merito diligere potuit homo huius mundi; quanto magis ciuibus patriae caelestis in hoc mundo peregrinantibus optandum est, et totis animi uiribus supplicandum, ut, quo plus in mundo quique ualent, eo amplius eius, qui super omnia est, Iudicis mandatis auscultare contendat, atque ad haec obseruanda secum eos quoque, qui sibi commissi sunt, exemplis simul et auctoritate instituant?

‘Tres sunt ergo regulae sacris inditae litteris, quibus paschae celebrandi tempus nobis praefinitum, nulla prorsus humana licet auctoritate mutari; e quibus duae in lege Mosi diuinitus statutae, tertia in euangelio per effectum dominicae passionis et resurrectionis adiuncta est. Praecepit enim lex, ut pascha primo mense anni et tertia eiusdem mensis septimana, id est a XVa die usque ad XXIam, fieri deberet; additum est per institutionem apostolicam ex euangelio, ut in ipsa tertia septimana diem dominicam expectare, atque in ea temporis paschalis initium tenere debeamus.

Quam uidelicet regulam triformem quisquis rite custodierit, numquam in adnotatione festi paschalis errabit. Uerum si de his singulis enucleatius ac latius audire desideras, scriptum est in Exodo, ubi liberandus de Aegypto populus Israel primum pascha facere iubetur, quia: “dixerit Dominus ad Mosen et Aaron: Mensis iste uobis principium mensium primus erit in mensibus anni. Loquimini ad uniuersum coetum filiorum Israel et dicite eis: Xa die mensis huius tollat unusquisque agnum per familias et domus suas.” Et paulo post: “Et seruabitis eum usque ad XIIIam diem mensis huius; immolabitque eum uniuersa multitudo filiorum Israel ad uesperam.”

Quibus uerbis manifestissime constat, quod ita in obseruatione paschali mentio fit diei XIIIae, ut non tamen in ipsa die XIIIa pascha fieri praecipiat; sed adueniente tandem uespera diei XIIIae, id est XVa luna, quae initium tertiae septimanae faciat, in caeli faciem prodeunte, agnus immolari iubeatur; et quod ipsa sit nox XVae lunae, in qua percussis Aegyptiis Israel est a longa seruitute redemptus. “VII,” inquit, “diebus azyma comedetis.” Quibus item uerbis tota tertia septimana eiusdem primi mensis decernitur sollemnis esse debere. Sed ne putaremus easdem VII dies a XIIIa usque ad XXam esse computandas, continuo subiecit: “In die primo non erit fermentum in domibus uestris. Quicumque comederit fermentum, peribit anima illa de

Israel, a die primo usque ad diem septimum,” et cetera, usquedum ait: “In eadem enim ipsa die educam exercitum uestrum de terra Aegypti.”

‘Primum ergo diem azymorum appellat eum, in quo exercitum eorum esset educturus de Aegypto. Constat autem, quia non XIIIa die, in cuius uespera agnus est immolatus, et quae proprie pascha siue phase dicitur; sed XVa sunt educti ex Aegypto, sicut in libro Numerorum apertissime scribitur: “Profecti igitur de Ramesse XVa die mensis primi, altera die phase, filii Israel in manu excelsa.” VII ergo dies azymorum, in quarum prima eductus est populus Domini ex Aegypto, ab initio, ut diximus, tertiae septimanae, hoc est a XVa die mensis primi usque ad XXIam eiusdem mensis diem completam computari oportet. Porro dies XIIIa extra hunc numerum separatim sub paschae titulo praenotatur, sicut Exodi sequentia patenter edocent; ubi cum dictum esset: “In eadem enim ipsa die educam exercitum uestrum de terra Aegypti;” protinus adiunctum est: “Et custodietis diem istum in generationes uestras ritu perpetuo. Primo mense, XIIIa die mensis comedetis azyma usque ad diem XXIam eiusdem mensis ad uesperam. VII diebus fermentatum non inuenietur in domibus uestris.” Quis enim non uideat, a XIIIa usque ad XXIam non VII solummodo, sed octo potius esse dies, si et ipsa XIIIa adnumeretur?

Sin autem, ut diligentius explorata scripturae ueritas docet, a uespera diei XIIIae usque ad uesperam XXIae computauerimus, uidebimus profecto, quod ita dies XIIIa uesperam suam in festi paschalis initium prorogat, ut non amplius tota sacra sollemnitas, quam VII tantummodo noctes cum totidem diebus conprehendat; unde uera esse probatur nostra definitio, qua tempus paschale primo mense anni et tertia eius ebdomada celebrandum esse diximus. Ueraciter enim tertia agitur ebdomada, quod a uespera XIIIae diei incipit, et in uespera XXIae completur.

‘Postquam uero pascha nostrum immolatus est Christus, diemque nobis dominicam, quae apud antiquos una uel prima sabbati siue sabbatorum uocatur, gaudio suae resurrectionis fecit esse sollemnem; ita hanc apostolica traditio festis paschalibus inseruit, ut nil omnimodis de tempore paschae legalis praeoccupandum, nihil minuendum esse decerneret. Quin potius statuit, ut expectaretur iuxta praeceptum legis idem primus anni mensis, expectaretur XIIIa dies illius, expectaretur uespera eiusdem. Et cum haec dies in sabbatum forte inciderit, tolleretur unusquisque agnum per familias et domus suas, et immolaret eum ad uesperam, id est praepararent omnes ecclesiae per orbem, quae unam catholicam faciunt, panem et uinum in mysterium carnis et sanguinis agni immaculati, qui abstulit peccata mundi; et praecedente congrua lectionum orationum, caerimoniarum paschalium sollemnitate, offerrent haec Domino in spem futurae suae redemptionis. Ipsa est enim eadem nox, in qua de Aegypto per sanguinem agni Israelitica plebs erepta est; ipsa, in qua per resurrectionem Christi liberatus est a morte aeterna populus omnis Dei. Mane autem inlucescente die dominica, primam paschalis festi diem celebrarent. Ipsa est enim dies, in qua resurrectionis suae gloriam Dominus multifario pia reuelationis gaudio discipulis patefecit. Ipsa prima dies azymorum, de qua

multum distincte in Leuitico scriptum est: “Mense primo, XIIIa die mensis ad uesperam phase Domini est, et XVa die mensis huius sollemnitas azymorum Domini est. VII diebus azyma comedetis. Dies primus erit celeberrimus, sanctusque.”

‘Si ergo fieri posset, ut semper in diem XVum primi mensis, id est in lunam XVam dominica dies incurreret, uno semper eodemque tempore cum antiquo Dei populo, quanquam sacramentorum genere discreto, sicut una eademque fide, pascha celebrare possemus. Quia uero dies septimanae non aequali cum luna tramite procurrit, decreuit apostolica traditio, quae per beatum Petrum Romae praedicata, per Marcum euangelistam et interpretem ipsius Alexandriae confirmata est, ut adueniente primo mense, adueniente in eo uespera diei XIIIae, expectetur etiam dies dominica, a XVa usque ad XXIam diem eiusdem mensis. In quacumque enim harum inuenta fuerit, merito in ea pascha celebrabitur; quia nimirum haec ad numerum pertinet illarum VII dierum, quibus azyma celebrari iubetur. Itaque fit, ut numquam pascha nostrum a septimana mensis primi tertia in utramvis partem declinet; sed uel totam eam, id est omnes VII legalium azymorum dies, uel certe aliquos de illis teneat. Nam etsi saltim unum ex eis, hoc est ipsum septimum adprehenderit, quem tam excellenter scriptura commendat: “Dies autem,” inquiens, “septimus erit celebrior et sanctor, nullumque seruile opus fiet in eo”; nullus arguere nos poterit, quod non recte dominicum paschae diem, quem de euangelio suscepimus, in ipsa, quam lex statuit, tertia primi mensis ebdomada celebremus.’

‘Cuius obseruantiae catholica ratione patefacta, patet e contrario error inrationabilis eorum, qui praefixos in lege terminos, nulla cogente necessitate, uel anticipare uel transcendere praesumunt.

Namque sine ratione necessitatis alicuius anticipant illi tempus in lege praescriptum, qui dominicum paschae diem a XIIIa mensis primi usque ad XXam putant lunam esse seruandum. Cum enim a uespera diei XIIIae uigilias sanctae noctis celebrare incipiunt, claret, quod illam in exordio sui paschae diem statuunt, cuius nullam omnino mentionem in decreto legis inueniunt. Et cum XXIa die mensis pascha dominicum celebrare refugiant, patet profecto, quod illam per omnia diem a sua sollemnitate secernunt, quam lex maiore prae ceteris festiuitate memorabilem saepenumero commendat; sicque diem paschae ordine peruerso, et aliquando in secunda ebdomada totam conpleant, et numquam in ebdomadae tertiae die septima ponant; rursumque, qui a XVIa die mensis saepedicti usque ad XXIIam pascha celebrandum magis autumant, non minore utique errore, tametsi altero latere a recto ueritatis tramite diuertunt, et ueluti naufragia Scyllae fugientes, in Charybdi uoraginem submergendi decidunt. Nam cum a luna XVIa primi mensis oriente, id est a uespera diei XVae pascha incipiendum doceant; nimirum constat, quia XIIIam diem mensis eiusdem, quam lex primitus et praecipue commendat, a sua prorsus sollemnitate secludunt; ita ut XVae, in qua populus Dei ab Aegyptia seruitute redemptus est, et in qua Dominus suo mundum sanguine a

peccatorum tenebris liberauit, in qua etiam sepultus spem nobis post mortem beatæ quietis tribuit, uix uesperam tangant.

‘Idemque poenam erroris sui in semet ipsos recipientes, cum in XXIIa die mensis paschæ diem statuunt dominicum, legitimos utique terminos paschæ aperta transgressione uiolant, utpote qui ab illius diei uespera pascha incipiunt, in qua hoc lex consummari et perfici debere decreuit, illam in pascha diem adsignent primam, cuius in lege mentio nulla usquam repperitur, id est quartæ primam septimanae. Qui utrique non solum in definitione et computo lunaris ætatis, sed et in mensis primi nonnumquam inuentione falluntur.

Quæ disputatio maior est, quam epistula hac uel ualeat comprehendere, uel debeat. Tantum hoc dicam, quod per æquinotium uernale semper inerrabiliter possit inueniri, qui mensis iuxta computum lunæ primus anni, qui esse debeat ultimus. Æquinotium autem iuxta sententiam omnium Orientalium et maxime Aegyptiorum, qui præ ceteris doctoribus calculandi palmam tenent, XII Kalendarum Aprilium die prouenire consuevit, ut etiam ipsi horologica inspectione probamus. Quaecumque ergo luna ante æquinotium plena est, XIIIa uidelicet uel XVa existens, hæc ad præcedentis anni nouissimum pertinet mensem, ideoque paschæ celebrando habilis non est. Quæ uero post æquinotium, uel in ipso æquinotio suum plenilunium habet, in hac absque ulla dubietate, quia primi mensis est, et antiquos pascha celebrare solitos, et nos, ubi dominica dies aduenerit, celebrare debere noscendum est. Quod ita fieri oportere illa nimirum ratio cogit, quia in Genesi scriptum est, quod “fecit Deus duo magna luminaria; luminare maius, ut præesset diei; et luminare minus, ut præesset nocti”; uel, sicut alia dicit editio, “luminare maius in inchoationem diei, et luminare minus in inchoationem noctis.” Sicut ergo prius sol a medio procedens orientis, æquinotium uernale suo præfixit exortu; deinde luna, sole ad uesperam occidente, et ipsa plena a medio secuta est orientis; ita omnibus annis idem primus lunæ mensis eodem necesse est ordine seruari, ut non ante æquinotium, sed uel ipso æquinotii die, sicut in principio factum est, uel eo transceso plenilunium habere debeat. At si uno saltim die plenilunium tempus æquinotii præcesserit, non hanc primo mensi anni incipientis, sed ultimo potius præteriti lunam esse adscribendam; et ideo festis paschalibus inhabilem memorata ratio probat.

‘Quod si mysticam quoque uos in his rationem audire delectat, primo mense anni, qui etiam mensis nouorum dictus est, pascha facere iubemur; quia renouato ad amorem caelestium spiritu mentis nostræ, sacramenta dominicæ resurrectionis et ereptionis nostræ celebrare debemus, tertia eiusdem mensis septimana facere præcipimur; quia ante legem et sub lege promissus, tertio tempore sæculi cum gratia uenit ipse, qui pascha nostrum immolaretur Christus; quia tertia post immolationem suæ passionis die resurgens a mortuis, hanc dominicam uocari, et in ea nos annuatim paschalia eiusdem resurrectionis uoluit festa celebrare; quia nos quoque ita solum ueraciter eius

sollemnia celebramus, si per fidem, spem et caritatem pascha, id est transitum, de hoc mundo ad Patrem, cum illo facere curamus. Post aequinoctium ueris plenilunium mensis praecipimur obseruare paschalis; ut uidelicet primo sol longiorem nocte faciat diem, deinde luna plenum suae lucis orbem mundo praesentet; quia primo quidem sol iustitiae, in cuius pennis est sanitas, id est Dominus Iesus, per resurrectionis suae triumphum cunctas mortis tenebras superauit; ac sic ascendens in caelos, misso desuper Spiritu, ecclesiam suam, quae saepe lunae uocabulo designatur, internae gratiae luce repleuit. Quem uidelicet ordinem nostrae salutis propheta contemplatus aiebat: “Eleuatus est sol, et luna stetit in ordine suo.”

‘Qui ergo plenitudinem lunae paschalis ante aequinoctium prouenire posse contenderit, talis in mysteriorum celebratione maximorum a sanctorum quidem scripturarum doctrina discordat; concordat autem eis, qui sine praeueniente gratia Christi se saluari posse confidunt; qui etsi uera lux tenebras mundi moriendo ac resurgendo numquam uicisset, perfectam se habere posse iustitiam dogmatizare praesumunt. Itaque post aequinoctialem solis exortum, post plenilunium primi mensis hunc ex ordine subsequens, id est post completam diem eiusdem mensis XIIIam, quae cuncta ex lege obseruanda accepimus, expectamus adhuc monente euangelio in ipsa ebdomada tertia tempus diei dominicae, et sic demum uotiuua paschae nostri festa celebramus, ut indicemus nos non cum antiquis excussum Aegyptiae seruitutis iugum uenerari, sed redemptionem totius mundi, quae in antiqui Dei populi liberatione praefigurata, in Christi autem resurrectione completa est, deuota fide ac dilectione colere, utque resurrectionis etiam nostrae, quam eadem die dominica futuram credimus, spe nos certissima gaudere signemus.

‘Hic autem, quem uobis sequendum monstramus, computus paschae decennouenali circulo continetur; qui dudum quidem, hoc est ipsis apostolorum temporibus, iam seruari in ecclesia coepit, maxime Romae et Aegypti, ut supra iam diximus. Sed per industriam Eusebii, qui a beato martyre Pamphylo cognomen habet, distinctius in ordinem compositus est; ut quod eatenus per Alexandriae pontificem singulis annis per omnes ecclesias mandari consuevit, iam deinde congesta in ordinem serie lunae XIIIae facillime posset ab omnibus sciri Cuius computum paschalis Theophilus Alexandriae praesul in centum annorum tempus Theodosio imperatori composuit. Item successor eius Cyrillus seriem XC et V annorum in quinque decennouenalibus circulis comprehendit; post quem Dionysius Exiguus totidem alios ex ordine pari schemate subnexuit, qui ad nostra usque tempora pertinebant.

Quibus termino adpropinquantibus, tanta hodie calculatorum exuberat copia, ut etiam in nostris per Britanniam ecclesiis plures sint, qui mandatis memoriae ueteribus illis Aegyptiorum argumentis, facillime possint in quotlibet spatia temporum paschales protendere circulos, etiamsi ad quingentos usque et XXX duos uoluerint annos; quibus expletis, omnia, quae ad solis et lunae, mensis et septimanae consequentiam spectant, eodem, quo

prius, ordine recurrunt. Ideo autem circulos eosdem temporum instantium uobis mittere supersedimus, quia de ratione tantum temporis paschalis instrui quaerentes, ipsos uobis circulos paschae catholicos abundare probastis.

‘Uerum his de pascha succincte, ut petisti, strictimque commemoratis, tonsuram quoque, de qua pariter uobis litteras fieri uoluisti, hortor, ut ecclesiasticam et Christianae fidei congruam habere curetis. Et quidem scimus, quia neque apostoli omnes uno eodemque sunt modo adtonsi, neque nunc ecclesia catholica, sicut una fide, spe, et caritate in Deum consentit, ita etiam una atque indissimili totum per orbem tonsurae sibi forma congruit. Denique, ut superiora, id est patriarcharum, tempora respiciamus, Iob, exemplar patientiae, dum ingruente tribulationum articulo caput totondit, probauit utique, quia tempore felicitatis capillos nutrire consuevit. At Ioseph et ipse castitatis, humilitatis, pietatis, ceterarumque uirtutum exsecutor ac doctor eximius, cum seruitio absoluendus adtonsus esse legitur, patet profecto, quia tempore seruitutis intonsus in carcere crinibus manere solebat. Ecce uterque uir Dei diuersum ab altero uultus habitum foris praemonstrabat, quorum tamen intus conscientia in parili uirtutum sibi gratia concordabat.

‘Uerum, etsi profiteri nobis liberum est, quia tonsurae discrimen non noceat, quibus pura in Deum fides, et caritas in proximum sincera est; maxime cum numquam patribus catholicis sicut de paschae uel fidei diuersitate conflictus, ita etiam de tonsurae differentia legatur aliqua fuisse controuersia; inter omnes tamen, quas uel in ecclesia, uel in uniuerso hominum genere repperimus tonsuras, nullam magis sequendam nobis amplectendamque iure dixerim ea, quam in capite suo gestabat ille, cui se confitenti Dominus ait: “Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo ecclesiam meam, et portae inferni non praeualebunt aduersus eam; et tibi dabo clauis regni caelorum”; nullam magis abominandam detestandamque merito cunctis fidelibus crediderim ea, quam habebat ille, cui gratiam Spiritus Sancti conparare uolenti dicit idem Petrus: “Pecunia tua tecum sit in perditionem, quoniam donum Dei existimasti per pecuniam possideri; non est tibi pars neque sors in sermone hoc.” Neque uero ob id tantum in coronam adtondemur, quia Petrus ita adtonsus est;

sed quia Petrus in memoriam dominicae passionis ita adtonsus est, idcirco et nos, qui per eandem passionem saluari desideramus, ipsius passionis signum cum illo in uertice, summa uidelicet corporis nostri parte gestamus. Sicut enim omnis ecclesia, quia per mortem sui uiuificatoris ecclesia facta est, signum sanctae crucis eius in fronte portare consuevit ut crebro uexilli huius munimine a malignorum spirituum defendatur incursibus; crebra huius admonitione doceatur se quoque carnem suam cum uitii et concupiscentiis crucifigere debere; ita etiam oportet eos, qui uel monachi uotum, uel gradum clericatus habentes, artioribus se necesse habent pro Domino continentiae frenis astringere, formam quoque coronae, quam ipse in passione spineam portauit in capite, ut spinas ac tribulos peccatorum nostrorum portaret, id est exportaret et auferret a nobis, suo quemque in capite per tonsuram praeferre; ut se etiam inrisiones et obprobria pro illo libenter ac promte omnia sufferre

ipso etiam frontispicio doceant; ut coronam uitae aeternae, quam repromisit Deus diligentibus se, se semper expectare, proque huius perceptione et aduersa se mundi et prospera contemnere designent.

Ceterum tonsuram eam, quam magum ferunt habuisse Simonem, quis, rogo, fidelium non statim cum ipsa magia primo detestetur et merito exsufflet aspectu? Quae in frontis quidem superficie coronae uidetur speciem praeferre; sed ubi ad ceruicem considerando perueneris, decurtatam eam, quam te uidere putabas, inuenies coronam; ut merito talem simoniacis et non Christianis habitum conuenire cognoscas; qui in praesenti quidem uita a deceptis hominibus putabantur digni perpetuae gloria coronae; sed in ea, quae hanc sequitur uitam, non solum omni spe coronae priuati, sed aeterna insuper sunt poena damnati.

‘Neque uero me haec ita prosecutum aestimes, quasi eos, qui hanc tonsuram habent, condemnandos iudicem, si fide et operibus unitati catholicae fauerint; immo confidenter profiteor plurimos ex eis sanctos ac Deo dignos extitisse, ex quibus est Adamnan, abbas et sacerdos Columbiensium egregius, qui cum legatus suae gentis ad Aldfridum regem missus, nostrum quoque monasterium uidere uoluisset, miramque in moribus ac uerbis prudentiam, humilitatem, religionem ostenderet, dixi illi inter alia conloquens: “Obsecro, sancte frater, qui ad coronam te uitae, quae terminum nesciat, tendere credis, quid contrario tuae fidei habitu terminatam in capite coronae imaginem portas? et si beati Petri consortium quaeris, cur eius, quem ille anathematizauit, tonsurae imaginem imitaris? et non potius eius, cum quo in aeternum beatus uiuere cupis, etiam nunc habitum te, quantum potes, diligere monstras?” Respondit ille: “Scias pro certo, frater mi dilecte, quia etsi Simonis tonsuram ex consuetudine patria habeam, simoniacam tamen perfidiam tota mente detestor ac respuo; beatissimi autem apostolorum principis, quantum mea paruitas sufficit, uestigia sequi desidero.”

At ego: “Credo,” inquam, “uere, quod ita sit; sed tamen indicio fit, quod ea, quae apostoli Petri sunt, in abdito cordis amplectimini, si quae eius esse nostis, etiam in facie tenetis. Namque prudentiam tuam facillime diiudicare reor, quod aptius multo sit, eius, quem corde toto abominaris, cuiusque horrendam faciem uidere refugis, habitum uultus a tuo uultu Deo iam dicato separare; et econtra eius, quem apud Deum habere patronum quaeris, sicut facta uel monita cupis sequi, sic etiam morem habitus te imitari condeceat.”

‘Haec tunc Adamnano dixi, qui quidem quantum conspectis ecclesiarum nostrarum statutis profecisset, probauit, cum reuersus ad Scottiam, multas postea gentis eiusdem turbas ad catholicam temporis paschalis obseruantiam sua praedicatione correxerat; tametsi eos, qui in Hii insula morabantur, monachos, quibusque speciali rectoris iure praeerat, necdum ad uiam statuti melioris reducere ualebat. Tonsuram quoque, si tantum sibi auctoritatis subesset, emendare meminisset.

‘Sed et tuam nunc prudentiam, rex, admoneo, ut ea, quae unitati catholicae et apostolicae ecclesiae concinnant, una cum gente, cui te Rex regum et

Dominus dominorum praefecit, in omnibus seruare contendas. Sic enim fit, ut post acceptam temporalis regni potentiam ipse beatissimus apostolorum princeps caelestis quoque regni tibi tuisque cum ceteris electis libens pandat introitum. Gratia te Regis aeterni longiori tempore regnantem ad nostram omnium pacem custodiat incolumem, dilectissime in Christo fili.'

Haec epistula cum praesente rege Naitono multisque uiris doctioribus esset lecta, ac diligenter ab his, qui intellegere poterant, in linguam eius propriam interpretata, multum de eius exhortatione gauisus esse perhibetur; ita ut exsurgens de medio optimatum suorum consessu, genua flecteret in terram, Deo gratias agens, quod tale munusculum de terra Anglorum mereretur accipere. 'Et quidem et antea noui,' inquit, 'quia haec erat uera paschae celebratio, sed in tantum modo rationem huius temporis obseruandi cognosco, ut parum mihi omnimodis uidear de his antea intellexisse. Unde palam profiteor uobisque, qui adsidetis, praesentibus protestor, quia hoc obseruare tempus paschae cum uniuersa mea gente perpetuo uolo; hanc accipere debere tonsuram, quam plenam esse rationis audimus, omnes, qui in meo regno sunt, clericos decerno.' Nec mora, quae dixerat, regia auctoritate perfecit. Statim namque iussu puplico mittebantur ad transcribendum, discendum, obseruandum, per uniuersas Pictorum prouincias circuli paschae decennouenales, oblitteratis per omnia erroneis LXXX et III annorum circulis. Adtondebantur omnes in coronam ministri altaris ac monachi; et quasi nouo se discipulatu beatissimi apostolorum principis Petri subditam, eiusque tutandam patrocinio gens correcta gaudebat.

[22] Nec multo post illi quoque, qui insulam Hii incolebant, monachi Scotticae nationis cum his, quae sibi erant subdita, monasteriis ad ritum paschae ac tonsurae canonicum Domino procurante perducti sunt. Siquidem anno ab incarnatione Domini DCCXVI, quo Osredo occiso Coenred gubernacula regni Nordanhymbrorum suscepit, cum uenisset ad eos de Hibernia Deo amabilis, et cum omni honorificentia nominandus pater ac sacerdos, Ecgberct, cuius superius memoriam saepius fecimus, honorifice ab eis et multo cum gaudio susceptus est. Qui quoniam et doctor suauiissimus, et eorum, quae agenda docebat, erat exsecutor deuotissimus, libenter auditus ab uniuersis, inmutauit piis ac sedulis exhortationibus inueteratam illam traditionem parentum eorum, de quibus apostolicum illum licet proferre sermonem, quod aemulationem Dei habebant, sed non secundum scientiam; catholicoque illos atque apostolico more celebrationem, ut diximus, praecipuae sollemnitis sub figura coronae perpetis agere perdociuit. Quod mira diuinae constat factum dispensatione pietatis, ut quoniam gens illa, quam nouerat scientiam diuinae cognitionis libenter ac sine inuidia populis Anglorum communicare curauit; ipsa quoque postmodum per gentem Anglorum in eis, quae minus habuerat, ad perfectam uiuendi normam perueniret. Sicut econtra Brettones, qui nolebant Anglis eam, quam habebant, fidei Christianae notitiam pandere, credentibus iam populis Anglorum, et in regula fidei catholicae per omnia instructis, ipsi adhuc inueterati et

claudicantes a semitis suis, et capita sine corona praetendunt, et sollemnia Christi sine ecclesiae Christi societate uenerantur.

Susceperunt autem Hiienses monachi docente Ecgbercto ritus uiuendi catholicos sub abbate Duunchado, post annos circiter LXXX, ex quo ad praedicationem gentis Anglorum Aidanum miserant antistitem. Mansit autem uir Domini Ecgberct annos XIII in praefata insula, quam ipse uelut noua quadam relucente gratia ecclesiasticae societatis et pacis Christo consecrauerat; annoque dominicae incarnationis DCCXXVIII, quo pascha dominicum octauo Kalendarum Maiarum die celebrabatur, cum missarum sollemnia in memoriam eiusdem dominicae resurrectionis celebrasset, eodem die et ipse migravit ad Dominum, ac gaudium summae festiuitatis, quod cum fratribus, quos ad unitatis gratiam conuerterat, inchoauit, cum Domino et apostolis, ceterisque caeli ciuibus conpleuit, immo id ipsum celebrare sine fine non desinit. Mira autem diuinae dispensatio prouisionis erat, quod uenerabilis uir non solum in pascha transiuit de hoc mundo ad Patrem; uerum etiam cum eo die pascha celebraretur, quo numquam prius in eis locis celebrari solebat. Gaudebant ergo fratres de agnitione certa et catholica temporis paschalis; laetabantur de patrocinio pergentis ad Dominum patris, per quem fuerant correcti;

gratulabatur ille, quod eatenus in carne seruatus est, donec illum in pascha diem suos auditores, quem semper antea uitabant, suscipere ac secum agere uideret. Sicque certus de illorum correctione reuerentissimus pater exsultauit, ut uideret diem Domini; uidit et gauisus est.

[23] Anno dominicae incarnationis DCCXXV, qui erat annus septimus Osrici regis Nordanhymbrorum, qui Coenredo successerat, Uictred filius Ecgberekti, rex Cantuariorum, defunctus est nono die Kalendarum Maiarum; et regni, quod per XXXIII semis annos tenebat, filios tres, Aedilberctum, Eadberctum, et Alricum, reliquit heredes.

Anno post quem proximo Tobias Hrofensis ecclesiae praesul defunctus est, uir, ut supra meminimus, doctissimus. Erat enim discipulus beatae memoriae magistrorum Theodori archiepiscopi, et abbatis Hadriani; unde, ut dictum est, cum eruditione litterarum uel ecclesiasticarum uel generalium, ita Grecam quoque cum Latina didicit linguam, ut tam notas ac familiares sibi eas quam natiuitatis suae loquellam haberet. Sepultus uero est in porticu sancti Pauli apostoli, quam intro ecclesiam sancti Andreae sibi ipse in locum sepulchri fecerat. Post quem episcopatus officium Alduulf, Berctualdo archiepiscopo consecrante, suscepit.

Anno dominicae incarnationis DCCXXVIII apparuerunt cometae duae circa solem, multum intuentibus terrorem incutientes. Una quippe solem praecedebat, mane orientem; altera uespere sequebatur occidentem, quasi orienti simul et occidenti dirae cladis praesagae;

uel certe una diei, altera noctis praecurrebat exortum, ut utroque tempore mala mortalibus imminere signarent. Portabant autem facem ignis contra Aquilonem, quasi ad accendendum adclinem; apparebantque mense Ianuario,

et duabus ferme septimanis permanebant. Quo tempore grauissima Sarracenorum lues Gallias misera caede uastabat, et ipsi non multo post in eadem prouincia dignas suae perfidiae poenas luebant. Quo anno sanctus uir Domini Ecgerct, ut supra commemorauimus, ipso die paschae migravit ad Dominum; et mox, peracto pascha, hoc est VIIa Iduum Maiarum die, Osric rex Nordanhymbrorum uita decessit, cum ipse regni, quod XI annis gubernabat, successorem fore Ceoluulfum decreuisset, fratrem illius, qui ante se regnauerat, Coenredi regis, cuius regni et principia et processus tot ac tantis redundauere rerum aduersantium motibus, ut, quid de his scribi debeat, quemue habitura sint finem singula, necdum sciri ualeat.

Anno dominicae incarnationis DCCXXXI, Berctuald archiepiscopus longa consumtus aetate defunctus est die Iduum Ianuariarum; qui sedit annos XXXVII, menses VI, dies XIII; pro quo anno eodem factus est archiepiscopus, uocabulo Tatuini, de prouincia Merciorum, cum fuisset presbyter in monasterio, quod uocatur Briudun. Consecratus est autem in Doruurni ciuitate a uiris uenerabilibus Danihele Uentano, et Ingualdo Lundoniensi, et Alduino Lyccitfeldensi, et Alduulfo Hrofensi antistitibus, die decima Iunii mensis, dominica;

uir religione et prudentia insignis, sacris quoque litteris nobiliter instructus.

Itaque in praesenti ecclesiis Cantuariorum Tatuini et Alduulf episcopi praesunt. Porro prouinciae Orientalium Saxonum Inguald episcopus; prouinciae Orientalium Anglorum Aldberct et Hadulac episcopi; prouinciae Occidentalium Saxonum Danihel et Fortheri episcopi; prouinciae Merciorum Alduini episcopus; et eis populis, qui ultra amnem Sabrinam ad occidentem habitant, Ualchstod episcopus; prouinciae Huicciorum Uilfrid episcopus; prouinciae Lindisfarorum Cyniberct episcopus praeest. Episcopatus Uectae insulae ad Danihelem pertinet episcopum Uentae ciuitatis. Prouincia Australium Saxonum iam aliquot annis absque episcopo manens ministerium sibi episcopale ab Occidentalium Saxonum antistite quaerit. Et hae omnes prouinciae ceteraeque australes ad confinium usque Hymbrae fluminis cum suis quaeque regibus Merciorum regi Aedilbaldo subiectae sunt.

At uero prouinciae Nordanhymbrorum, cui rex Ceoluulf praeest, IIII nunc episcopi praesulatum tenent; Uilfrid in Eburacensi ecclesia, Ediluald in Lindisfaronensi, Acca in Hagustaldensi, Pecthelm in ea, quae Candida Casa uocatur, quae nuper, multiplicatis fidelium plebibus, in sedem pontificatus addita ipsum primum habet antistitem.

Pictorum quoque natio tempore hoc et foedus pacis cum gente habet Anglorum, et catholicae pacis ac ueritatis cum uniuersali ecclesia particeps existere gaudet. Scotti, qui Britanniam incolunt, suis contenti finibus nil contra gentem Anglorum insidiarum moliuntur aut fraudium. Brettones, quamuis et maxima ex parte domestico sibi odio gentem Anglorum, et totius catholicae ecclesiae statum pascha minus recto, moribusque inprobis inpuignent; tamen et diuina sibi et humana prorsus resistente uirtute, in neutro cupitum possunt obtinere propositum; quippe qui quamuis ex parte sui sint iuris, nonnulla

tamen ex parte Anglorum sunt seruitio mancipati.

Qua adridente pace ac serenitate temporum, plures in gente Nordanhymbrorum, tam nobiles, quam priuati, se suosque liberos, depositis armis, satagunt magis, accepta tonsura, monasterialibus adscribere uotis, quam bellicis exercere studiis. Quae res quem sit habitura finem, posterior aetas uidebit.

Hic est inpraesentiarum uniuersae status Britanniae, anno aduentus Anglorum in Britanniam circiter ducentesimo octogesimo quinto, dominicae autem incarnationis anno DCCXXXI; in cuius regno perpetuo exsultet terra, et congratulante in fide eius Britannia, laetentur insulae multae, et confiteantur memoriae sanctitatis eius.

[24] Uerum ea, quae temporum distinctione latius digesta sunt, ob memoriam conseruandam breuiter recapitulari placuit.

Anno igitur ante incarnationem dominicam sexagesimo Gaius Iulius Caesar primus Romanorum Britannias bello pulsauit, et uicit, nec tamen ibi regnum potuit obtinere.

Anno ab incarnatione Domini XLVI, Claudius secundus Romanorum Britannias adiens, plurimam insulae partem in deditionem recepit, et Orcadas quoque insulas Romano adiecit imperio.

Anno incarnationis dominicae CLXVII, Eleuther Romae praesul factus XV annos ecclesiam gloriosissime rexit, cui litteras rex Britanniae Lucius mittens, ut Christianus efficeretur, petiit et inpetrauit.

Anno ab incarnatione Domini CLXXXVIII, Seuerus imperator factus XVII annis regnauit, qui Britanniam uallo a mari usque ad mare praecinxit.

Anno CCCLXXXI, Maximus in Britannia creatus imperator, in Galliam transiit, et Gratianum interfecit.

Anno CCCCVIII, Roma a Gothis fracta, ex quo tempore Romani in Britannia regnare cessarunt.

Anno CCCCXXX, Palladius ad Scottos in Christum credentes a Caelestino papa primus mittitur episcopus.

Anno CCCCXLVIII, Marcianus cum Ualentiniano imperium suscipiens, VII annis tenuit, quorum tempore Angli a Brettonibus accersiti Britanniam adierunt.

Anno DXXXVIII, eclipsis solis facta est XIII. Kalendas Martias, ab hora prima usque ad tertiam.

Anno DXL, eclipsis solis facta XII. Kalendas Iulias, et apparuerunt stellae pene hora dimidia ab hora diei tertia.

Anno DXLVII, Ida regnare coepit, a quo regalis Nordanhymbrorum prosapia originem tenet, et XII annis in regno permansit.

Anno DLXV, Columba presbyter de Scottia uenit Britanniam, ad docendos Pictos, et in insula Hii monasterium fecit.

Anno DXCVI, Gregorius papa misit Britanniam Augustinum cum monachis, qui uerbum Dei genti Anglorum euangelizarent.

Anno DXCVII, uenere Britanniam praefati doctores, qui fuit annus plus

minus CL aduentus Anglorum in Britanniam.

Anno DCI, misit papa Gregorius pallium Britanniam Augustino iam facto episcopo, et plures uerbi ministros, in quibus et Paulinum.

Anno DCIII, pugnatum ad Degsastana.

Anno DCIII, Orientales Saxones fidem Christi percipiunt sub rege Sabercto antistite Mellito.

Anno DCV, Gregorius obiit.

Anno DCXVI, Aedilberct rex Cantuariorum defunctus est.

Anno DCXXV, Paulinus a Iusto archiepiscopo ordinatur genti Nordanhymbrorum antistes.

Anno DCXXXVI, Eanfled, filia Aeduini regis, baptizata cum XII in sabbato pentecostes.

Anno DCXXXVII, Eduini rex baptizatus cum sua gente in pascha.

Anno DCXXXIII, Eduine rege peremto, Paulinus Cantiam rediit.

Anno DCXL, Eadbald rex Cantuariorum obiit.

Anno DCXLII, Osuald rex occisus.

Anno DCXLIII, Paulinus, quondam Eboraci, sed tunc Hrofensis antistes ciuitatis, migravit ad Dominum.

Anno DCLI, Osuini rex occisus, et Aidan episcopus defunctus est.

Anno DCLIII, Middilangli sub principe Peada fidei mysteriis sunt inbuti.

Anno DCLV, Penda periit, et Mercii sunt facti Christiani.

Anno DCLXIII, eclypsis facta; Earconberct rex Cantuariorum defunctus, et Colman cum Scottis ad suos reuersus est; et pestilentia uenit; et Ceadda ac Uilfrid Nordanhymbrorum ordinantur episcopi.

Anno DCLXVIII, Theodorus ordinatur episcopus.

Anno DCLXX, Osuiu rex Nordanhymbrorum obiit.

Anno DCLXXIII, Ecgrberct rex Cantuariorum obiit; et synodus facta est ad Herutforda, praesente Ecgrido rege, praesidente archiepiscopo Theodoro, utillima, X capitulorum.

Anno DCLXXV, Uulfheri rex Merciorum, postquam XVII annos regnauerat, defunctus, Aedilredo fratri reliquit imperium.

Anno DCLXXVI, Aedilred uastauit Cantiam.

Anno DCLXXVIII, cometa apparuit; Uilfrid episcopus a sede sua pulsus est ab Ecgrido rege; et pro eo Bosa, Eata, et Eadhaeth consecrati antistites.

Anno DCLXXVIII, alfuini occisus.

Anno DCLXXX, synodus facta in campo Haethfeltha de fide catholica, praesidente archiepiscopo Theodoro; in quo adfuit Iohannes abba Romanus. Quo anno Hild abbatissa in Streanashala obiit.

Anno DCLXXXV, Ecgrid rex Nordanhymbrorum occisus est. Anno eodem Hlothari rex Cantuariorum obiit.

Anno DCLXXXVIII, Caeduald rex Occidentalium Saxonum Romam de Britannia pergit.

Anno DCXC, Theodorus archiepiscopus obiit.

Anno DCXCVII, Osthryd regina a suis, id est Merciorum, primatibus

interemta.

Anno DCXCVIII, Berctred dux regius Nordanhybrorum a Pictis interfectus.

Anno DCCIII, Aedilred, postquam XXXI annos Merciorum genti praefuit, monachus factus Coenredo regnum dedit.

Anno DCCV, Aldfrid rex Nordanhybrorum defunctus est.

Anno DCCVIII, Coenred rex Merciorum, postquam V annos regnavit, Romam pergit.

Anno DCCXI, Berctfrid praefectus cum Pictis pugnavit.

Anno DCCXVI, Osred rex Nordanhybrorum interfectus, et rex Merciorum Ceolred defunctus; et uir Domini Ecgerct Hienses monachos ad catholicum pascha et ecclesiasticam correxit tonsuram.

Anno DCCXXV, Uictred rex Cantuariorum obiit.

Anno DCCXXVIII, cometae apparuerunt, sanctus Ecgerct transiit, Osric mortuus est.

Anno DCCXXXI, Berctuald archiepiscopus obiit. Anno eodem Tatuini consecratus archiepiscopus nonus Doruuernensis ecclesiae, Aedilbaldo rege Merciorum XV. agente annum inperii.

Haec de historia ecclesiastica Britanniarum, et maxime gentis Anglorum, prout uel ex litteris antiquorum, uel ex traditione maiorum, uel ex mea ipse cognitione scire potui, Domino adiuuante digessi Baeda famulus Christi, et presbyter monasterii beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, quod est ad Uiuraemuda, et Ingyrium.

Qui natus in territorio eiusdem monasterii, cum essem annorum septem, cura propinquorum datus sum educandus reuerentissimo abbati Benedicto, ac deinde Ceolfrido; cunctumque ex eo tempus uitae in eiusdem monasterii habitatione peragens, omnem meditandis scripturis operam dedi; atque inter obseruantiam disciplinae regularis, et cotidianam cantandi in ecclesia curam, semper aut discere, aut docere, aut scribere dulce habui.

Nono decimo autem uitae meae anno diaconatum, tricesimo gradum presbyteratus, utrumque per ministerium reuerentissimi episcopi Iohannis, iubente Ceolfrido abbate, suscepi.

Ex quo tempore accepti presbyteratus usque ad annum aetatis meae LVIII, haec in scripturam sanctam meae meorumque necessitati ex opusculis uenerabilium patrum breuiter adnotare, siue etiam ad formam sensus et interpretationis eorum superadicere curauit:

‘In principium Genesis, usque ad natiuitatem Isaac et eiectionem Ismahelis, libros III.

De tabernaculo et uasis eius, ac uestibus sacerdotum, libros III.

In primam partem Samuelis, id est usque ad mortem Saulis, libros III.

De aedificatione templi, allegoricae expositionis, sicut et cetera, libros II.

Item, in Regum librum XXX quaestionum.

In Prouerbia Salomonis libros III.

In Cantica canticorum libros VII.

In Isaïam, Danihelem, XII prophetas, et partem Hieremiae, distinctiones capitulorum ex tractatu beati Hieronimi excerptas.

In Ezram et Neemiam libros III.

In Canticum Habacum librum I.

In librum beati patris Tobiae explanationis allegoricae de Christo et ecclesia librum I.

Item, Capitula lectionum in Pentateucum Mosi, Iosue, Iudicum;

In libros Regum et Uerba dierum;

In librum beati patris Iob;

In Parabolas, Ecclesiasten, et Cantica canticorum;

In Isaïam prophetam, Ezram quoque et Neemiam.

In euangelium Marci libros IIII.

In euangelium Lucae libros VI.

Omeliarum euangelii libros II.

In apostolum quaecumque in opusculis sancti Augustini exposita inueni, cuncta per ordinem transscribere curauì.

In Actus apostolorum libros II.

In Epistulas VII catholicas libros singulos.

In Apocalypsin sancti Iohannis libros III.

Item, Capitula lectionum in totum nouum testamentum, excepto euangelio.

Item librum epistularum ad diuersos: quarum de sex aetatibus saeculi una est; de mansionibus filiorum Israel una; una de eo, quod ait Isaïas: 'Et claudentur ibi in carcerem, et post dies multos uisitabantur;' de ratione bissexti una; de aequinoctio iuxta Anatolium una.

Item de historiis sanctorum: librum uitae et passionis sancti Felicis confessoris de metrico Paulini opere in prosam transtuli;

librum uitae et passionis sancti Anastasii, male de Greco translatus, et peius a quodam inperito emendatus, prout potui, ad sensum correxi; uitam sancti patris monachi simul et antistitis Cudbercti, et prius heroico metro et postmodum plano sermone, descripsi.

Historiam abbatum monasterii huius, in quo supernae pietati deseruire gaudeo, Benedicti, Ceolfridi, et Huaetbercti in libellis duobus.

Historiam ecclesiasticam nostrae insulae ac gentis in libris V.

Martyrologium de nataliciis sanctorum martyrum diebus; in quo omnes, quos inuenire potui, non solum qua die, uerum etiam quo genere certaminis, uel sub quo iudice mundum uicerint, diligenter adnotare studui.

Librum hymnorum diuerso metro siue rhythmo.

Librum epigrammatum heroico metro, siue elegiaco.

De natura rerum, et de temporibus libros singulos; item de temporibus librum I maiorem.

Librum de orthographia, alfabeti ordine distinctum.

Item librum de metrica arte, et huic adiectum alium de schematibus siue tropis libellum, hoc est de figuris modisque locutionum, quibus scriptura sancta contexta est.'

Teque deprecor, bone Iesu, ut cui propitius donasti uerba tuae scientiae
dulciter haurire, dones etiam benignus aliquando ad te fontem omnis
sapientiae peruenire, et parere semper ante faciem tuam

BAEDAE CONTINUATIO

Anno DCCXXXI, Ceoluulf rex captus, et adtonsus, et remissus in regnum; Acca episcopus de sua sede fugatus. Anno DCCXXXII, Ecgeberct pro Uilfrido Eboraci episcopus factus.

Cynibertus episcopus Lindisfarorum obiit.

Anno ab incarnatione Domini DCCXXXIII Tatuini archiepiscopus, accepto ab apostolica auctoritate pallio, ordinavit Aluic et Sigfridum episcopos.

Anno DCCXXXIII, eclipsis facta est solis XVIII, Kal. Sep. circa horam diei tertiam, ita ut pene totus orbis solis quasi nigerrimo et horrendo scuto uideretur esse coopertus.

Anno DCCXXXIII, luna sanguineo rubore perfusa, quasi hora integra II. Kal. Febr. circa galli cantum, dehinc nigredine subsequente ad lucem propriam reuersa.

Anno ab incarnatione Christi DCCXXXIII Tatuini episcopus obiit.

Anno DCCXXXV, Nothelmus archiepiscopus ordinatur; et Ecgeberctus episcopus, accepto ab apostolica sede pallio, primus post Paulinum in archiepiscopatum confirmatus est; ordinavitque Fruidbertum et Fruiduualdum episcopos, et Baeda presbyter obiit.

Anno DCCXXXVII, nimia siccitas terram fecit infecundam; et Ceoluulfus sua uoluntate adtonsus regnum Eadbercto reliquit.

Anno DCCXXXIX, Edilhartus Occidentalium Saxonum rex obiit; et Nothelmus archiepiscopus.

Anno DCCXL, Cudberctus pro Nothelmo consecratus est.

Aedilbaldus rex Merciorum per impiam fraudem uastabat partem Nordanhymbrorum;

eratque rex eorum Eadberctus occupatus cum suo exercitu contra Pictos. Aediluualdus quoque episcopus obiit, et pro eo Conuulfus ordinatur antistes. Arnuuini et Eadberctus interempti.

Anno DCCXLI, siccitas magna terram occupauit. Carolus rex Francorum obiit; et pro eo filii Caroloman et Pippin regnum acceperunt.

Anno DCCXLV, Uilfrid episcopus et Ingualdus Lundoniae episcopus migrauerunt ad Dominum.

Anno DCCXLVII, Herefridus uir Dei obiit.

Anno DCCL, Cudretus rex Occidentalium Saxonum surrexit contra Aedilbaldum regem et Oengusum. Theudor atque Eanredus obierunt.

Eadberctus campum Cyl cum aliis regionibus suo regno addidit.

Anno DCCLIII. anno regni Eadbercti quinto, [quinto] Idus Ianuarias eclipsis solis facta est. Postea eodem anno et mense, hoc est nono Kalendarum Februariarum, luna eclipsim pertulit, horrendo et nigerrimo scuto, ita ut sol paulo ante, cooperta.

Anno DCCLIII, Bonifacius, qui et Uinfridus, Francorum episcopus, cum

quinguenta tribus martyrio coronatur; et pro eo Redgerus consecratur archiepiscopus a Stephano papa.

Anno DCCLVII, Aedilbaldus rex Merciorum a suis tutoribus nocte morte fraudulenta miserabiliter peremptus occubuit; Beornredus regnare coepit; Cyniuulfus rex Occidentalium Saxonum obiit. Eodem etiam anno Offa, fugato Beornredo, Merciorum regnum sanguinolento quaesiuit gladio.

Anno DCCLVIII, Eadberctus rex Nordanhymbrorum Dei amoris causa, et caelestis patriae uiolentia, accepta sancti Petri tonsura, filio suo Osuulfo regnum reliquit.

Anno DCCLVIII, Osuulfus a suis ministris facinore occisus est;

et Edilualdus anno eodem a sua plebe electus intrauit in regnum;

cuius secundo anno magna tribulatio mortalitatis uenit et duobus ferme annis permansit, populantibus duris ac diuersis egritudinibus, maxime tamen dysenteriae languore.

Anno DCCLXI, Oengus Pictorum rex obiit, qui regni sui principium usque ad finem facinore cruento tyrannus perduxit carnifex; et Osuini occisus est.

Anno DCCLXV, Aluchredus rex susceptus est in regnum.

Anno DCCLXVI, Ecgberctus archiepiscopus prosapia regali ditatus, ac diuina scientia imbutus, et Frithubertus, uere fideles episcopi, ad Dominum migrauerunt.

The Dual Text



Bede's Chair, St. Paul's Church, Jarrow

DUAL LATIN AND ENGLISH TEXT



Translated by A. M. Sellar

In this section, readers can view a section by section text of Bede's' *Historia Ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, alternating between the original Latin and Sellar's English translation.

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PRAEFATIO — PREFACE

GLORIOSISSIMO REGI CEOLUULFO BAEDA FAMULUS CHRISTI
ET PRESBYTER

To the most glorious king Ceolwulf. Bede, the servant of Christ and Priest.

Historiam gentis Anglorum ecclesiasticam, quam nuper edideram, libentissime tibi desideranti, rex, et prius ad legendum ac probandum transmissi, et nunc ad transscribendum ac plenius ex tempore meditandum retransmitto; satisque studium tuae sinceritatis amplector, quo non solum audiendis scripturae sanctae uerbis aurem sedulus accommodas, uerum etiam noscendis priorum gestis siue dictis, et maxime nostrae gentis uirorum inlustrium, curam uigilanter impendis. Siue enim historia de bonis bona referat, ad imitandum bonum auditor sollicitus instigatur; seu mala commemoret de prauis, nihilominus religiosus ac pius auditor siue lector deuotando quod noxium est ac peruersum, ipse sollertius ad exsequenda ea, quae bona ac Deo digna esse cognouerit, accenditur. Quod ipsum tu quoque uigilantissime deprehendens, historiam memoratam in notitiam tibi simul et eis, quibus te regendis diuina praefecit auctoritas, ob generalis curam salutis latius propalari desideras. Ut autem in his, quae scripsi, uel tibi, uel ceteris auditoribus siue lectoribus huius historiae occasionem dubitandi subtraham, quibus haec maxime auctoribus didicerim, breuiter intimare curabo.

I formerly, at your request, most readily sent to you the Ecclesiastical History of the English Nation, which I had lately published, for you to read and judge; and I now send it again to be transcribed, and more fully studied at your leisure. And I rejoice greatly at the sincerity and zeal, with which you not only diligently give ear to hear the words of Holy Scripture, but also industriously take care to become acquainted with the actions and sayings of former men of renown, especially of our own nation. For if history relates good things of good men, the attentive hearer is excited to imitate that which is good; or if it recounts evil things of wicked persons, none the less the conscientious and devout hearer or reader, shunning that which is hurtful and wrong, is the more earnestly fired to perform those things which he knows to be good, and worthy of the service of God. And as you have carefully marked this, you are desirous that the said history should be more fully made known to yourself, and to those over whom the Divine Authority has appointed you governor, from your great regard to the common good. But to the end that I may remove all occasion of doubting what I have written, both from yourself and other readers or hearers of this history, I will take care briefly to show you from what authors I chiefly learned the same.

Auctor ante omnes atque adiutor opusculi huius Albinus abba reuerentissimus, uir per omnia doctissimus, extitit; qui in ecclesia Cantuariorum a beatae memoriae Theodoro archiepiscopo et Hadriano abbate,

uiris uenerabilibus atque eruditissimis, institutus, diligenter omnia, quae in ipsa Cantuariorum prouincia, uel etiam in contiguis eidem regionibus a discipulis beati papae Gregorii gesta fuere, uel monimentis litterarum, uel seniorum traditione cognouerat; et ea mihi de his, quae memoria digna uidebantur, per religiosum Lundoniensis ecclesiae presbyterum Nothelmum, siue litteris mandata, siue ipsius Nothelmi uiua uoce referenda, transmisit. Qui uidelicet Nothelmus postea Romam ueniens, nonnullas ibi beati Gregorii papae simul et aliorum pontificum epistulas, perscrutato eiusdem sanctae ecclesiae Romanae scrinio, permissu eius, qui nunc ipsi ecclesiae praest Gregorii pontificis, inuenit, reuersusque nobis nostrae historiae inserendas cum consilio praefati Albini reuerentissimi patris adtulit. A principio itaque uoluminis huius usque ad tempus, quo gens Anglorum fidem Christi percepit, ex priorum maxime scriptis hinc inde collectis ea, quae promeremus, didicimus. Exinde autem usque ad tempora praesentia, quae in ecclesia Cantuariorum per discipulos beati papae Gregorii, siue successores eorum, uel sub quibus regibus gesta sint, memorati abbatis Albini industria, Nothelmo, ut diximus, perferente, cognouimus. Qui etiam prouinciae Orientalium simul et Occidentalium Saxonum, nec non et Orientalium Anglorum atque Nordanhymbrorum, a quibus praesulibus, uel quorum tempore regum gratiam euangelii perceperint, nonnulla mihi ex parte prodiderunt. Denique hortatu praecipue ipsius Albini, ut hoc opus adgredi auderem, prouocatus sum. Sed et Danihel reuerentissimus Occidentalium Saxonum episcopus, qui nunc usque superest, nonnulla mihi de historia ecclesiastica prouinciae ipsius, simul et proxima illi Australium Saxonum, nec non et Uectae insulae litteris mandata declarauit. Qualiter uero per ministerium Ceddi et Ceadda religiosorum Christi sacerdotum, uel prouincia Merciorum ad fidem Christi, quam non nouerat, peruenerit, uel prouincia Orientalium Saxonum fidem, quam olim exsufflauerat, recuperauerit, qualis etiam ipsorum patrum uita uel obitus extiterit, diligenter a fratribus monasterii, quod ab ipsis conditum Læstingaeu cognominatur, agnouimus. Porro in prouincia Orientalium Anglorum, quae fuerint gesta ecclesiastica, partim ex scriptis uel traditione priorum, partim reuerentissimi abbatis Esi relatione conperimus. At uero in prouincia Lindissi, quae sint gesta erga fidem Christi, quaeue successio sacerdotalis extiterit, uel litteris reuerentissimi antistitis Cynibercti uel aliorum fidelium uirorum uiua uoce didicimus. Quae autem in Nordanhymbrorum prouincia, ex quo tempore fidem Christi perceperunt, usque ad praesens per diuersas regiones in ecclesia sint acta, non uno quolibet auctore, sed fidei innumerorum testium, qui haec scire uel meminisse poterant, adsertione cognoui, exceptis his, quae per me ipsum nosse poteram. Inter quae notandum, quod ea, quae de sanctissimo patre et antistite Cudbercto, uel in hoc uolumine, uel in libello gestorum ipsius conscripsi, partim ex eis, quae de illo prius a fratribus ecclesiae Lindisfarnensis scripta repperi, adsumsi, simpliciter fidem historiae, quam legebam, accommodans, partim uero ea, quae certissima fidelium uirorum attestazione per me ipse cognoscere potui, sollerter adicere curauim.

Lectoremque suppliciter obsecro, ut, siqua in his, quae scripsimus, aliter quam se ueritas habet, posita reppererit, non hoc nobis imputet, qui, quod uera lex historiae est, simpliciter ea, quae fama uulgante collegimus, ad instructionem posteritatis litteris mandare studuimus.

My principal authority and aid in this work was the most learned and reverend Abbot Albinus; who, educated in the Church of Canterbury by those venerable and learned men, Archbishop Theodore of blessed memory, and the Abbot Hadrian, transmitted to me by Nothelm, the pious priest of the Church of London, either in writing, or by word of mouth of the same Nothelm, all that he thought worthy of memory that had been done in the province of Kent, or the adjacent parts, by the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory, as he had learned the same either from written records, or the traditions of his predecessors. The same Nothelm, afterwards went to Rome, and having, with leave of the present Pope Gregory, searched into the archives of the Holy Roman Church, found there some epistles of the blessed Pope Gregory, and other popes; and, returning home, by the advice of the aforesaid most reverend father Albinus, brought them to me, to be inserted in my history. Thus, from the beginning of this volume to the time when the English nation received the faith of Christ, we have acquired matter from the writings of former men, gathered from various sources; but from that time till the present, what was transacted in the Church of Canterbury by the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory or their successors, and under what kings the same happened, has been conveyed to us, as we have said, by Nothelm through the industry of the aforesaid Abbot Albinus. They also partly informed me by what bishops and under what kings the provinces of the East and West Saxons, as also of the East Angles, and of the Northumbrians, received the grace of the Gospel. In short, I was chiefly encouraged to undertake this work by the exhortations of the same Albinus. In like manner, Daniel, the most reverend Bishop of the West Saxons, who is still living, communicated to me in writing some things relating to the Ecclesiastical History of that province, and the adjoining one of the South Saxons, as also of the Isle of Wight. But how, by the ministry of those holy priests of Christ, Cedd and Ceadda, the province of the Mercians was brought to the faith of Christ, which they knew not before, and how that of the East Saxons recovered the faith after having rejected it, and how those fathers lived and died, we learned from the brethren of the monastery, which was built by them, and is called Laestingaeu. Further, what ecclesiastical matters took place in the province of the East Angles, was partly made known to us from the writings and tradition of former men, and partly by the account of the most reverend Abbot Esi. What was done with regard to the faith of Christ, and what was the episcopal succession in the province of Lindsey, we had either from the letters of the most reverend prelate Cynibert, or by word of mouth from other persons of good credit. But what was done in the Church in the different parts of the province of Northumbria from the time when they received the faith of Christ till this

present, I received not on the authority of any one man, but by the faithful testimony of innumerable witnesses, who might know or remember the same; besides what I had of my own knowledge. Wherein it is to be observed, that what I have written concerning our most holy father, Bishop Cuthbert, either in this volume, or in my account of his life and actions, I partly took from what I found written of him by the brethren of the Church of Lindisfarne, accepting without reserve the statements I found there; but at the same time took care to add such things as I could myself have knowledge of by the faithful testimony of trustworthy informants. And I humbly entreat the reader, that if he shall find in these our writings anything not delivered according to the truth, he will not lay the blame of it on me, for, as the true rule of history requires, withholding nothing, I have laboured to commit to writing such things as I could gather from common report, for the instruction of posterity.

Praeterea omnes, ad quos haec eadem historia peruenire potuerit nostrae nationis, legentes siue audientes, suppliciter precor, ut pro meis infirmitatibus et mentis et corporis apud supernam clementiam saepius interuenire meminerint; et in suis quique prouinciis hanc mihi suae remunerationis uicem rependant, ut, qui de singulis prouinciis siue locis sublimioribus, quae memoratu digna atque incolis grata credideram, diligenter adnotare curauim, apud omnes fructum piae intercessionis inueniam.

Moreover, I beseech all men who shall hear or read this history of our nation, that for my infirmities both of mind and body, they will offer up frequent intercessions to the throne of Grace. And I further pray, that in recompense for the labour wherewith I have recorded in the several provinces and more important places those events which I considered worthy of note and of interest to their inhabitants, I may for my reward have the benefit of their pious prayers.

LIBER PRIMUS — BOOK I

CHAP. 1

Brittania Oceani insula, cui quondam Albion nomen fuit, inter septentrionem et occidentem locata est, Germaniae, Galliae, Hispaniae, maximis Europae partibus, multo interuallo aduersa. Quae per miliapassuum DCCC in Boream longa, latitudinis habet milia CC, exceptis dumtaxat prolixioribus diuersorum promonteriorum tractibus, quibus efficitur, ut circuitus eius quadragies octies LXXV milia conpleat. Habet a meridie Galliam Belgicam, cuius proximum litus transmeantibus aperit ciuitas, quae dicitur Rutubi portus, a gente Anglorum nunc corrupte Reptacastir uocata, interposito mari a Gessoriaco Morynorum gentis litore proximo, traiectu milium L, siue, ut quidam scripsere, stadiorum CCCCL. A tergo autem, unde Oceano infinito patet, Orcadas insulas habet.

Opima frugibus atque arboribus insula, et alendis apta pecoribus ac iumentis; uineas etiam quibusdam in locis germinans; sed et auium ferax terra marique generis diuersi; fluuiis quoque multum piscosis ac fontibus praeclara copiosis, et quidem praecipue issicio abundat, et anguilla. Capiuntur autem saepissime et uituli marini, et delphines, nec non et balenae; exceptis uariorum generibus concyliorum; in quibus sunt et musculae, quibus inclusam saepe margaritam omnis quidem coloris optimam inueniunt, id est et rubicundi, et purpurei, et iacintini, et prasini, sed maxime candidi. Sunt et cocleae satis superque abundantes, quibus tinctura coccinei coloris conficitur, cuius rubor pulcherrimus nullo umquam solis ardore, nulla ualet pluuiarum iniuria pallescere; sed quo uetustior, eo solet esse uenustior. Habet fontes salinarum, habet et fontes calidos, et ex eis fluuios balnearum calidarum omni aetati et sexui per distincta loca iuxta suum cuique modum accommodos. Aqua enim, ut sanctus Basilius dicit, feruidam qualitatem recipit, cum per certa quaedam metalla transcurrit, et fit non solum calida, sed et ardens. Quae etiam uenis metallorum, aeris, ferri, et plumbi, et argenti, fecunda, gignit et lapidem gagatem plurimum optimumque; est autem nigrogemmeus, et ardens igni admotus, incensus serpentes fugat, adtritu calefactus adplicita detinet, aequae ut sucinum. Erat et ciuitatibus quondam XX et VIII nobilissimis insignita, praeter castella innumera, quae et ipsa muris turribus, portis, ac seris erant instructa firmissimis.

Et quia prope sub ipso septentrionali uertice mundi iacet, lucidas aestate noctes habet; ita ut medio saepe tempore noctis in quaestionem ueniat intuentibus, utrum crepusculum adhuc permaneat uespertinum, an iam aduenerit matutinum, utpote nocturno sole non longe sub terris ad orientem boreales per plagas redeunte; unde etiam plurimae longitudinis habet dies aestate, sicut et noctes contra in bruma, sole nimirum tunc Lybicas in partes secedente, id est horarum X et VIII; plurimae item breuitatis noctes aestate, et dies habet in bruma, hoc est sex solummodo aequinoctialium horarum;

cum in Armenia, Macedonia, Italia, ceterisque eiusdem lineae regionibus longissima dies siue nox XV, breuissima VIII conpleat horas.

Haec in praesenti, iuxta numerum librorum, quibus lex diuina scripta est, quinque gentium linguis, unam eandemque summae ueritatis et uerae sublimitatis scientiam scrutatur, et confitetur, Anglorum uidelicet, Brettonum, Scottorum, Pictorum et Latinorum, quae meditatione scripturarum ceteris omnibus est facta communis.

In primis autem haec insula Brettones solum, a quibus nomen accepit, incolas habuit; qui de tractu Armoricano, ut fertur, Britanniam aduecti, australes sibi partes illius uindicarunt.

Et cum plurimam insulae partem, incipientes ab Austro, possedissent, contigit gentem Pictorum de Scythia, ut perhibent, longis nauibus non multis Oceanum ingressam, circumagente flatu uentorum, extra fines omnes Britanniae Hiberniam peruenisse, eiusque septentrionales oras intrasse, atque inuenta ibi gente Scottorum, sibi quoque in partibus illius sedes petisse, nec inpetrare potuisse. Est autem Hibernia insula omnium post Britanniam maxima, ad occidentem quidem Britanniae sita; sed sicut contra Aquilonem ea breuior, ita in meridiem se trans illius fines plurimum protendens, usque contra Hispaniae septentrionalia, quamuis magno aequore interiacente peruenit. Ad hanc ergo usque peruenientes nauigio Picti, ut diximus, petierunt in ea sibi quoque sedes et habitationem donari.

Respondebant Scotti, quia non ambos eos caperet insula, ‘sed possumus,’ inquit, ‘salubre uobis dare consilium, quid agere ualeatis. Nouimus insulam aliam esse non procul a nostra contra ortum solis, quam saepe lucidioribus diebus de longe aspicere solemus. Hanc adire si uultis, habitabilem uobis facere ualeatis;

uel, siqui restiterit, nobis auxiliariis utimini.’ Itaque petentes Britanniam Picti, habitare per septentrionales insulae partes coeperunt, nam austrina Brettones occupauerant. Cumque uxores Picti non habentes peterent a Scottis, ea solum condicione dare consenserunt, ut ubi res ueniret in dubium, magis de feminea regum prosapia quam de masculina regem sibi eligerent; quod usque hodie apud Pictos constat esse seruatum.

Procedente autem tempore, Britannia post Brettones et Pictos tertiam Scottorum nationem in Pictorum parte recepit; qui duce Reuda de Hibernia progressi, uel amicitia uel ferro sibimet inter eos sedes, quas hactenus habent, uindicarunt; a quo uidelicet duce usque hodie Dalreudini uocantur, nam lingua eorum daal partem significat.

Hibernia autem et latitudine sui status, et salubritate ac serenitate aerum multum Britanniae praestat, ita ut raro ibi nix plus quam triduana remaneat; nemo propter hiemem aut faena secet aestate, aut stabula fabricet iumentis; nullum ibi reptile uideri soleat, nullus uiuere serpens ualeat; nam saepe illo de Britannia adlati serpentes, mox ut, proximante terris nauigio, odore aeris illius

adtacti fuerint, intereunt; quin potius omnia pene, quae de eadem insula sunt, contra uenenum ualent. Denique uidimus, quibusdam a serpente percussis, rasa folia codicum, qui de Hibernia fuerant, et ipsam rasuram aquae inmissam ac potui datam, talibus protinus totam uim ueneni grassantis, totum inflati corporis absumsisse ac sedasse tumorem. Diues lactis ac mellis insula, nec uinearum experts, piscium uolucrumque, sed et ceruorum caprearumque uenatu insignis. Haec autem proprie patria Scottorum est; ab hac egressi, ut diximus, tertiam in Britannia Brettonibus et Pictis gentem addiderunt.

Est autem sinus maris permaximus, qui antiquitus gentem Brettonum a Pictis secernebat, qui ab occidente in terras longo spatio erumpit, ubi est ciuitas Brettonum munitissima usque hodie, quae uocatur Alcluith; ad cuius uidelicet sinus partem septentrionalem Scotti, quos diximus, aduenientes sibi locum patriae fecerunt.

Chap. I.

Of the Situation of Britain and Ireland, and of their ancient inhabitants.

Britain, an island in the Atlantic, formerly called Albion, lies to the north-west, facing, though at a considerable distance, the coasts of Germany, France, and Spain, which form the greatest part of Europe. It extends 800 miles in length towards the north, and is 200 miles in breadth, except where several promontories extend further in breadth, by which its compass is made to be 4,875 miles. To the south lies Belgic Gaul. To its nearest shore there is an easy passage from the city of Rutubi Portus, by the English now corrupted into Reptacaestir. The distance from here across the sea to Gessoriacum, the nearest shore in the territory of the Morini, is fifty miles, or as some writers say, 450 furlongs. On the other side of the island, where it opens upon the boundless ocean, it has the islands called Orcades. Britain is rich in grain and trees, and is well adapted for feeding cattle and beasts of burden. It also produces vines in some places, and has plenty of land and water fowl of divers sorts; it is remarkable also for rivers abounding in fish, and plentiful springs. It has the greatest plenty of salmon and eels; seals are also frequently taken, and dolphins, as also whales; besides many sorts of shell-fish, such as mussels, in which are often found excellent pearls of all colours, red, purple, violet and green, but chiefly white. There is also a great abundance of snails, of which the scarlet dye is made, a most beautiful red, which never fades with the heat of the sun or exposure to rain, but the older it is, the more beautiful it becomes. It has both salt and hot springs, and from them flow rivers which furnish hot baths, proper for all ages and both sexes, in separate places, according to their requirements. For water, as St. Basil says, receives the quality of heat, when it runs along certain metals, and becomes not only hot but scalding. Britain is rich also in veins of metals, as copper, iron, lead, and silver; it produces a great deal of excellent jet, which is black and sparkling,

and burns when put to the fire, and when set on fire, drives away serpents; being warmed with rubbing, it attracts whatever is applied to it, like amber. The island was formerly distinguished by twenty-eight famous cities, besides innumerable forts, which were all strongly secured with walls, towers, gates, and bars. And, because it lies almost under the North Pole, the nights are light in summer, so that at midnight the beholders are often in doubt whether the evening twilight still continues, or that of the morning has come; since the sun at night returns to the east in the northern regions without passing far beneath the earth. For this reason the days are of a great length in summer, and on the other hand, the nights in winter are eighteen hours long, for the sun then withdraws into southern parts. In like manner the nights are very short in summer, and the days in winter, that is, only six equinoctial hours. Whereas, in Armenia, Macedonia, Italy, and other countries of the same latitude, the longest day or night extends but to fifteen hours, and the shortest to nine.

There are in the island at present, following the number of the books in which the Divine Law was written, five languages of different nations employed in the study and confession of the one self-same knowledge, which is of highest truth and true sublimity, to wit, English, British, Scottish, Pictish, and Latin, the last having become common to all by the study of the Scriptures. But at first this island had no other inhabitants but the Britons, from whom it derived its name, and who, coming over into Britain, as is reported, from Armorica, possessed themselves of the southern parts thereof. Starting from the south, they had occupied the greater part of the island, when it happened, that the nation of the Picts, putting to sea from Scythia, as is reported, in a few ships of war, and being driven by the winds beyond the bounds of Britain, came to Ireland and landed on its northern shores. There, finding the nation of the Scots, they begged to be allowed to settle among them, but could not succeed in obtaining their request. Ireland is the largest island next to Britain, and lies to the west of it; but as it is shorter than Britain to the north, so, on the other hand, it runs out far beyond it to the south, over against the northern part of Spain, though a wide sea lies between them. The Picts then, as has been said, arriving in this island by sea, desired to have a place granted them in which they might settle. The Scots answered that the island could not contain them both; but “We can give you good counsel,” said they, “whereby you may know what to do; we know there is another island, not far from ours, to the eastward, which we often see at a distance, when the days are clear. If you will go thither, you can obtain settlements; or, if any should oppose you, we will help you.” The Picts, accordingly, sailing over into Britain, began to inhabit the northern parts thereof, for the Britons had possessed themselves of the southern. Now the Picts had no wives, and asked them of the Scots; who would not consent to grant them upon any other terms, than that when any question should arise, they should choose a king from the female royal race rather than from the male: which custom, as is well known, has been observed among the Picts to this day. In process of time, Britain,

besides the Britons and the Picts, received a third nation, the Scots, who, migrating from Ireland under their leader, Reuda, either by fair means, or by force of arms, secured to themselves those settlements among the Picts which they still possess. From the name of their commander, they are to this day called Dalreudini; for, in their language, Dal signifies a part.

Ireland is broader than Britain and has a much healthier and milder climate; for the snow scarcely ever lies there above three days: no man makes hay in the summer for winter's provision, or builds stables for his beasts of burden. No reptiles are found there, and no snake can live there; for, though snakes are often carried thither out of Britain, as soon as the ship comes near the shore, and the scent of the air reaches them, they die. On the contrary, almost all things in the island are efficacious against poison. In truth, we have known that when men have been bitten by serpents, the scrapings of leaves of books that were brought out of Ireland, being put into water, and given them to drink, have immediately absorbed the spreading poison, and assuaged the swelling.

The island abounds in milk and honey, nor is there any lack of vines, fish, or fowl; and it is noted for the hunting of stags and roe-deer. It is properly the country of the Scots, who, migrating from thence, as has been said, formed the third nation in Britain in addition to the Britons and the Picts.

There is a very large gulf of the sea, which formerly divided the nation of the Britons from the Picts; it runs from the west far into the land, where, to this day, stands a strong city of the Britons, called Alcluith. The Scots, arriving on the north side of this bay, settled themselves there.

CHAP. 2

Verum eadem Brittania Romanis usque ad Gaium Iulium Caesarem inaccessa atque incognita fuit; qui anno ab Urbe condita DCXCIII, ante vero incarnationis dominicae tempus anno LXmo, functus gradu consulatus cum Lucio Bibulo, dum contra Germanorum Gallorumque gentes, qui Hreno tantum flumine dirimebantur, bellum gereret, venit ad Morianos, unde in Britanniam proximus et brevissimus transitus est; et navibus (h)onerariis atque actuariis circiter octoginta praeparatis, in Britanniam transvehitur, ubi acerba primum pugna fatigatus, deinde adversa tempestate correptus, plurimam classis partem, et non parvum numerum militum, equitum vero pene omnem disperdidit. Regressus in Galliam, legiones in hiberna dimisit, ac DCtas naves utriusque commodi fieri imperavit; quibus iterum in Britanniam primo vere transvectus, dum ipse in hostem cum exercitu pergit, naves in anchoris stantes tempestate correptae vel conlissae inter se, vel arenis inlissae ac dissolutae sunt; ex quibus XL perierunt, ceterae cum magna difficultate reparate sunt. Caesaris equitatus primo congressu a Brittanis victus, ibique Labienus tribunus occisus est. Secundo proelio cum magno suorum discrimine victos Brittanos in fugam vertit. Inde ad flumen Tamensim profectus.

In huius ulteriore ripa Cassobellauno duce immensa hostium multitudo consederat, ripamque fluminis ac pene totum sub aqua uadum acutissimis sudibus praestruxerat; quarum uestigia sudium ibidem usque hodie uisuntur, et uidetur inspectantibus, quod singulae earum ad modum humani femoris grossae, et circumfusae plumbo immobiliter erant in profundum fluminis infixae. Quod ubi a Romanis deprehensum ac uitatum est, barbari legionum impetum non ferentes, siluis sese abdidere, unde crebris eruptionibus Romanos grauiter ac saepe lacerabant. Interea Trinouantum firmissima ciuitas cum Androgio duce, datis XL obsidibus, Caesari sese dedit. Quod exemplum secutae, urbes aliae conplures in foedus Romanorum uenerunt. Hisdem demonstrantibus, Caesar oppidum Cassobellauni inter duas paludes situm, obtentu insuper siluarum munitum, omnibusque rebus confertissimum tandem graui pugna cepit. Exin Caesar a Brittanis reuersus in Galliam, postquam legiones in hiberna misit, repentinis bellorum tumultibus undique circumuentus et conflictatus est.

Chap. II.

How Caius Julius Caesar was the first Roman that came into Britain.

Now Britain had never been visited by the Romans, and was entirely unknown to them before the time of Caius Julius Caesar, who, in the year 693 after the foundation of Rome, but the sixtieth year before the Incarnation of our Lord, was consul with Lucius Bibulus. While he was making war upon

the Germans and the Gauls, who were divided only by the river Rhine, he came into the province of the Morini, whence is the nearest and shortest passage into Britain. Here, having provided about eighty ships of burden and fast-sailing vessels, he sailed over into Britain; where, being first roughly handled in a battle, and then caught in a storm, he lost a considerable part of his fleet, no small number of foot-soldiers, and almost all his cavalry. Returning into Gaul, he put his legions into winter-quarters, and gave orders for building six hundred sail of both sorts. With these he again crossed over early in spring into Britain, but, whilst he was marching with the army against the enemy, the ships, riding at anchor, were caught in a storm and either dashed one against another, or driven upon the sands and wrecked. Forty of them were lost, the rest were, with much difficulty, repaired. Caesar's cavalry was, at the first encounter, defeated by the Britons, and there Labienus, the tribune, was slain. In the second engagement, with great hazard to his men, he defeated the Britons and put them to flight. Thence he proceeded to the river Thames, where a great multitude of the enemy had posted themselves on the farther side of the river, under the command of Cassobellaunus, and fenced the bank of the river and almost all the ford under water with sharp stakes: the remains of these are to be seen to this day, apparently about the thickness of a man's thigh, cased with lead, and fixed immovably in the bottom of the river. This being perceived and avoided by the Romans, the barbarians, not able to stand the charge of the legions, hid themselves in the woods, whence they grievously harassed the Romans with repeated sallies. In the meantime, the strong state of the Trinovantes, with their commander Androgius, surrendered to Caesar, giving him forty hostages. Many other cities, following their example, made a treaty with the Romans. Guided by them, Caesar at length, after severe fighting, took the town of Cassobellaunus, situated between two marshes, fortified by sheltering woods, and plentifully furnished with all necessaries. After this, Caesar returned from Britain into Gaul, but he had no sooner put his legions into winter quarters, than he was suddenly beset and distracted with wars and sudden risings on every side.

CHAP. 3

Anno autem ab Urbe condita DCCXCVIII Claudius imperator ab Augusto quartus, cupiens utilem reipublicae ostentare principem, bellum ubique et uictoriam undecumque quaesiuit. Itaque expeditionem in Britanniam mouit, quae excitata in tumultum propter non redhibitos transfugas uidebatur; transuectus in insulam est, quam neque ante Iulium Caesarem, neque post eum quisquam adire ausus fuerat, ibique sine ullo proelio ac sanguine intra paucissimos dies plurimam insulae partem in deditionem recepit. Orcadas etiam insulas ultra Britanniam in oceano positas, Romano adiecit imperio, ac sexto, quam profectus erat, mense Romam rediit, filioque suo Brittanici nomen inposuit. Hoc autem bellum quarto imperii sui anno compleuit, qui est annus ab incarnatione Domini XLVI; quo etiam anno fames grauissima per Syriam facta est, quae in Actibus Apostolorum per prophetam Agabum praedicta esse memoratur.

Ab eodem Claudio Uespasianus, qui post Neronem imperauit, in Britanniam missus, etiam Uectam insulam, Britanniae proximam a meridie, Romanorum dicioni subiugauit; quae habet ab oriente in occasum XXX circiter milia passuum, ab austro in boream XII, in orientalibus suis partibus mari sex milium, in occidentalibus trium, a meridiano Britanniae littore distans. Succedens autem Claudio in imperium Nero, nihil omnino in re militari ausus est. Unde inter alia Romani regni detrimenta innumera, Britanniam pene amisit; nam duo sub eo nobilissima oppida illic capta atque subuersa sunt.

Chap. III.

How Claudius, the second of the Romans who came into Britain, brought the islands Orcades into subjection to the Roman empire; and Vespasian, sent by him, reduced the Isle of Wight under the dominion of the Romans.

In the year of Rome 798, Claudius, fourth emperor from Augustus, being desirous to approve himself a prince beneficial to the republic, and eagerly bent upon war and conquest on every side, undertook an expedition into Britain, which as it appeared, was roused to rebellion by the refusal of the Romans to give up certain deserters. No one before or after Julius Caesar had dared to land upon the island. Claudius crossed over to it, and within a very few days, without any fighting or bloodshed, the greater part of the island was surrendered into his hands. He also added to the Roman empire the Orcades, which lie in the ocean beyond Britain, and, returning to Rome in the sixth month after his departure, he gave his son the title of Britannicus. This war he concluded in the fourth year of his reign, which is the forty-sixth from the

Incarnation of our Lord. In which year there came to pass a most grievous famine in Syria, which is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles to have been foretold by the prophet Agabus.

Vespasian, who was emperor after Nero, being sent into Britain by the same Claudius, brought also under the Roman dominion the Isle of Wight, which is close to Britain on the south, and is about thirty miles in length from east to west, and twelve from north to south; being six miles distant from the southern coast of Britain at the east end, and three at the west. Nero, succeeding Claudius in the empire, undertook no wars at all; and, therefore, among countless other disasters brought by him upon the Roman state, he almost lost Britain; for in his time two most notable towns were there taken and destroyed.

CHAP. 4

Anno ab incarnatione Domini CmoLmoVIto Marcus Antoninus Uerus XIII ab Augusto regnum cum Aurelio Commodo fratre suscepit; quorum temporibus cum Eleuther uir sanctus pontificatui Romanae ecclesiae praeesset, misit ad eum Lucius Britanniarum rex epistolam, obsecrans, ut per eius mandatum Christianus efficeretur; et mox effectum piae postulationis consecutus est; susceptamque fidem Brittani usque in tempora Diocletiani principis inuiolatam integramque quietam in pace seruabant.

Chap. IV.

How Lucius, king of Britain, writing to Pope Eleutherus, desired to be made a Christian.

In the year of our Lord 156, Marcus Antoninus Verus, the fourteenth from Augustus, was made emperor, together with his brother, Aurelius Commodus. In their time, whilst the holy Eleutherus presided over the Roman Church, Lucius, king of Britain, sent a letter to him, entreating that by a mandate from him he might be made a Christian. He soon obtained his pious request, and the Britons preserved the faith, which they had received, uncorrupted and entire, in peace and tranquillity until the time of the Emperor Diocletian.

CHAP. 5

Anno ab incarnatione Domini CLXXXVIII Seuerus, genere Afer Tripolitanus ab oppido Lepti, XVII ab Augusto imperium adeptus X et VII annis tenuit. Hic natura saeuus, multis semper bellis lacessitus, fortissime quidem rempublicam, sed laboriosissime rexit.

Victor ergo ciuiliū bellorum, quae ei grauissima occurrerant, in Britannias defectu pene omnium sociorum trahitur. Ubi magnis grauibusque proeliis saepe gestis receptam partem insulae a ceteris indomitis gentibus, non muro, ut quidam aestimant, sed uallo distinguendam putauit. Murus etenim de lapidibus, uallum uero, quo ad repellendam uim hostium castra muniuntur, fit de cespitibus, quibus circumcisis, e terra uelut murus exstruitur altus supra terram, ita ut in ante sit fossa, de qua leuati sunt cespites, supra quam sudes de lignis fortissimis praefiguntur. Itaque Seuerus magnam fossam firmissimumque uallum, crebris insuper turribus communitum, a mari ad mare duxit. Ibique apud Eboracum oppidum morbo obiit.

Reliquit duos filios, Bassianum et Getam; quorum Geta hostis publicus iudicatus interiit, Bassianus, Antonio cognomine adsumpto, regno potitus est.

Chap. V.

How the Emperor Severus divided from the rest by a rampart that part of Britain which had been recovered.

In the year of our Lord 189, Severus, an African, born at Leptis, in the province of Tripolis, became emperor. He was the seventeenth from Augustus, and reigned seventeen years. Being naturally of a harsh disposition, and engaged in many wars, he governed the state vigorously, but with much trouble. Having been victorious in all the grievous civil wars which happened in his time, he was drawn into Britain by the revolt of almost all the confederated tribes; and, after many great and severe battles, he thought fit to divide that part of the island, which he had recovered, from the other unconquered nations, not with a wall, as some imagine, but with a rampart. For a wall is made of stones, but a rampart, with which camps are fortified to repel the assaults of enemies, is made of sods, cut out of the earth, and raised high above the ground, like a wall, having in front of it the trench whence the sods were taken, with strong stakes of wood fixed above it. Thus Severus drew a great trench and strong rampart, fortified with several towers, from sea to sea. And there, at York, he fell sick afterwards and died, leaving two sons, Bassianus and Geta; of whom Geta died, adjudged an enemy of the State; but Bassianus, having taken the surname of Antonius, obtained the empire.

CHAP. 6

Anno incarnationis dominicae CCLXXXVI Diocletianus XXXIII ab Augusto imperator ab exercitu electus annis XX fuit, Maximianumque cognomento Herculium socium creavit imperii. Quorum tempore Corausius quidam, genere quidem infimus, sed consilio et manu promptus, cum ad observanda Oceani litora, quae tunc Franci et Saxones infestabant, positus, plus in perniciem quam in profectum reipublicae ageret, ereptam praedonibus praedam nulla ex parte restituendo dominis, sed sibi soli vindicando; accendens suspicionem, quia ipsos quoque hostes ad incursandos fines artifice negligentia permetteret; quam ob rem a Maximiano iussus occidi purpuram sumpsit, ac Britannias occupavit; quibus sibi per VII annos fortissime vindicatis ac retentis, tandem fraude Allecti socii sui interfectus est. Allectus postea ereptam Carausio insulam per triennium tenuit; quem Asclipiodotus praefectus praetorio oppressit, Britanniamque post X annos recepit.

Interea Diocletianus in oriente, Maximianus Herculius in occidente vastari ecclesias, affligi, interficique Christianos, decimo post Neronem loco praeceperunt; quae persecutio omnibus fere ante actis diuturnior atque inmanior fuit; nam per X annos incendiis ecclesiarum, proscriptionibus innocentum, caedibus martyrum incessabiliter acta est. Denique etiam Britanniam tum plurima confessionis Deo deuotae gloria sublimavit.

Chap. VI.

Of the reign of Diocletian, and how he persecuted the Christians.

In the year of our Lord 286, Diocletian, the thirty-third from Augustus, and chosen emperor by the army, reigned twenty years, and created Maximian, surnamed Herculius, his colleague in the empire. In their time, one Carausius, of very mean birth, but a man of great ability and energy, being appointed to guard the sea-coasts, then infested by the Franks and Saxons, acted more to the prejudice than to the advantage of the commonwealth, by not restoring to its owners any of the booty taken from the robbers, but keeping all to himself; thus giving rise to the suspicion that by intentional neglect he suffered the enemy to infest the frontiers. When, therefore, an order was sent by Maximian that he should be put to death, he took upon him the imperial purple, and possessed himself of Britain, and having most valiantly conquered and held it for the space of seven years, he was at length put to death by the treachery of his associate Allectus. The usurper, having thus got the island from Carausius, held it three years, and was then vanquished by Asclepiodotus, the captain of the Praetorian guards, who thus at the end of ten years restored Britain to the Roman empire.

Meanwhile, Diocletian in the east, and Maximian Herculius in the west,

commanded the churches to be destroyed, and the Christians to be persecuted and slain. This persecution was the tenth since the reign of Nero, and was more lasting and cruel than almost any before it; for it was carried on incessantly for the space of ten years, with burning of churches, proscription of innocent persons, and the slaughter of martyrs. Finally, Britain also attained to the great glory of bearing faithful witness to God.

CHAP. 7

Siquidem in ea passus est sanctus Albanus, de quo presbyter Fortunatus in Laude uirginum, cum beatorum martyrum, qui de toto orbe ad Dominum uenirent, mentionem faceret, ait:

Albanum egregium fecunda Britannia profert.

Qui uidelicet Albanus, paganus adhuc, cum perfidorum principum mandata aduersum Christianos saeuirent, clericum quendam persecutores fugientem hospitio recepit; quem dum orationibus continuis ac uigiliis die noctuque studere conspiceret, subito diuina gratia respectus, exemplum fidei ac pietatis illius coepit aemulari, ac salutaribus eius exhortationibus paulatim edoctus, relictis idolatriae tenebris, Christianus integro ex corde factus est. Cumque praefatus clericus aliquot diebus apud eum hospitaretur, peruenit ad aures nefandi principis confessorem Christi, cui necdum fuerat locus martyrii deputatus, penes Albanum latere. Unde statim iussit milites eum diligentius inquirere. Qui cum ad tugurium martyris peruenissent, mox se sanctus Albanus pro hospite ac magistro suo, ipsius habitu, id est caracalla, qua uestiebatur, indutus, militibus exhibuit, atque ad iudicem uinctus perductus est.

Contigit autem iudicem ea hora, qua ad eum Albanus adducebatur, aris assistere, ac daemonibus hostias offerre. Cumque uidisset Albanum, mox ira succensus nimia, quod se ille ultro pro hospite, quem susceperat, militibus offerre, ac discrimini dare praesumsisset, ad simulacra daemonum, quibus adsistebat, eum iussit pertrahi: ‘Quia rebellem,’ inquit, ‘ac sacrilegum celare quam militibus reddere maluisti, ut contemtor diuum meritam blasphemiae suae poenam lueret, quaecumque illi debebantur supplicia, tu soluere habes, si a cultu nostrae religionis discedere temtas.’ At sanctus Albanus, qui se ultro persecutoribus fidei Christianum esse prodiderat, nequaquam minas principis metuit; sed accinctus armis militiae spiritualis, palam se iussis illius parere nolle pronuntiabat. Tum iudex: ‘Cuius,’ inquit, ‘familiae uel generis es?’ Albanus respondit: ‘Quid ad te pertinet, qua sim stirpe genitus? sed si ueritatem religionis audire desideras, Christianum iam me esse, Christianisque officiis uacare cognosce.’ Ait iudex: ‘Nomen tuum quaero, quod sine mora mihi insinua.’ At ille: ‘Albanus,’ inquit, ‘a parentibus uocor, et Deum uerum ac uiuum, qui uniuersa creauit, adoro semper, et colo.’ Tum iudex repletus iracundia dixit: ‘Si uis perennis uitae felicitate perfrui, diis magnis sacrificare ne differas.’ Albanus respondit: ‘Sacrificia haec, quae a uobis redduntur daemonibus, nec auxiliari subiectis possunt, nec supplicantium sibi desideria uel uota conplere. Quin immo, quicumque his sacrificia simulacris obtulerit, aeternas inferni poenas pro mercede recipiet.’

His auditis, iudex nimio furore commotus, caedi sanctum Dei confessorem a tortoribus praecepit, autumans se uerberibus, quam uerbis non poterat,

cordis eius emollire constantiam. Qui cum tormentis afficeretur acerrimis, patienter haec pro Domino, immo gaudenter ferebat. At ubi iudex illum tormentis superari, uel a cultu Christianae religionis reuocari non posse persensit, capite eum plecti iussit.

Cumque ad mortem duceretur, peruenit ad flumen, quod muro et harena, ubi feriendus erat, meatu rapidissimo diuidebatur; uiditque ibi non paruam hominum multitudinem utriusque sexus, condicionis diuersae et aetatis, quae sine dubio diuinitatis instinctu ad obsequium beatissimi confessoris ac martyris uocabatur, et ita fluminis ipsius occupabat pontem, ut intra uesperam transire uix posset. Denique cunctis pene egressis, iudex sine obsequio in ciuitate substiterat.

Igitur sanctus Albanus, cui ardens inerat deuotio mentis ad martyrium ocius peruenire, accessit ad torrentem, et dirigens ad caelum oculos, illico siccato alueo, uidit undam suis cecidisse ac uiam dedisse uestigiis. Quod cum inter alios etiam ipse carnifex, qui eum percussurus erat, uidisset, festinauit ei, ubi ad locum destinatum morti uenerat, occurrere, diuino nimirum admonitus instinctu, proiectoque ense, quem strictum tenuerat, pedibus eius aduoluitur, multum desiderans, ut cum martyre, uel pro martyre, quem percutere iuebatur, ipse potius mereretur percuti.

Dum ergo is ex persecutore factus esset collega ueritatis et fidei, ac iacente ferro esset inter carnifices iusta cunctatio, montem cum turbis reuerentissimus Dei confessor ascendit; qui oportune laetus, gratia decentissima, quingentis fere passibus ab harena situs est, uariis herbarum floribus depictus, immo usque quaque uestitus; in quo nihil repente arduum, nihil praeceps, nihil abruptum, quem lateribus longe lateque deductum in modum aequoris natura conplanat, dignum uidelicet eum, pro insita sibi specie uenustatis, iam olim reddens, qui beati martyris cruore dicaretur. In huius ergo uertice sanctus Albanus dari sibi a Deo aquam rogauit, statimque, incluso meatu, ante pedes eius fons perennis exortus est, ut omnes agnoscerent etiam torrentem martyri obsequium detulisse; neque enim fieri poterat, ut in arduo montis cacumine martyr aquam, quam in fluuio non reliquerat, peteret, si hoc opportunum esse non uideret.

Qui uidelicet fluuius, ministerio persoluto, deuotione completa, officii testimonium relinquens, reuersus est ad naturam. Decollatus itaque martyr fortissimus ibidem accepit coronam uitae, quam repromisit Deus diligentibus se. Sed ille, qui piis ceruicibus impias intulit manus, gaudere super mortuum non est permissus;

namque oculi eius in terram una cum beati martyris capite deciderunt.

Decollatus est ibi etiam tum miles ille, qui antea superno nutu correptus, sanctum Dei confessorem ferire recusauit; de quo nimirum constat, quia, etsi fonte baptismatis non est ablutus, sui tamen est sanguinis lauacro mundatus, ac regni caelestis dignus factus ingressu. Tum iudex, tanta miraculorum

caelestium nouitate percussus, cessari mox a persecutione praecepit, honorem referre incipiens caedi sanctorum, per quam eos opinabatur prius a Christianae fidei posse deuotione cessare. Passus est autem beatus Albanus die .X. Kalendarum Iuliarum iuxta ciuitatem Uerolanium, quae nunc a gente Anglorum Uerlamaca^{stir} siue Uaeclingaca^{stir} appellatur, ubi postea, redeunte temporum Christianorum serenitate, ecclesia est mirandi operis atque eius martyrio condigna extracta. In quo uidelicet loco usque ad hanc diem curatio infirmorum, et frequentium operatio uirtutum celebrari non desinit. Passi sunt ea tempestate Aaron et Iulius Legionum urbis ciues, aliique utriusque sexus diuersis in locis perplures, qui diuersis cruciatibus torti, et inaudita membrorum discriptione lacerati, animas ad supernae ciuitatis gaudia perfecto agone miserunt.

Chap. VII.

The Passion of St. Alban and his companions, who at that time shed their blood for our Lord.

At that time suffered St. Alban, of whom the priest Fortunatus, in the Praise of Virgins, where he makes mention of the blessed martyrs that came to the Lord from all parts of the world, says:

And fruitful Britain noble Alban rears.

This Alban, being yet a pagan, at the time when at the bidding of unbelieving rulers all manner of cruelty was practised against the Christians, gave entertainment in his house to a certain clerk, flying from his persecutors. This man he observed to be engaged in continual prayer and watching day and night; when on a sudden the Divine grace shining on him, he began to imitate the example of faith and piety which was set before him, and being gradually instructed by his wholesome admonitions, he cast off the darkness of idolatry, and became a Christian in all sincerity of heart. The aforesaid clerk having been some days entertained by him, it came to the ears of the impious prince, that a confessor of Christ, to whom a martyr's place had not yet been assigned, was concealed at Alban's house. Whereupon he sent some soldiers to make a strict search after him. When they came to the martyr's hut, St. Alban presently came forth to the soldiers, instead of his guest and master, in the habit or long coat which he wore, and was bound and led before the judge.

It happened that the judge, at the time when Alban was carried before him, was standing at the altar, and offering sacrifice to devils. When he saw Alban, being much enraged that he should thus, of his own accord, dare to put himself into the hands of the soldiers, and incur such danger on behalf of the guest whom he had harboured, he commanded him to be dragged to the images of the devils, before which he stood, saying, "Because you have chosen to conceal a rebellious and sacrilegious man, rather than to deliver him up to the soldiers, that his contempt of the gods might meet with the penalty

due to such blasphemy, you shall undergo all the punishment that was due to him, if you seek to abandon the worship of our religion.” But St. Alban, who had voluntarily declared himself a Christian to the persecutors of the faith, was not at all daunted by the prince’s threats, but putting on the armour of spiritual warfare, publicly declared that he would not obey his command. Then said the judge, “Of what family or race are you?”— “What does it concern you,” answered Alban, “of what stock I am? If you desire to hear the truth of my religion, be it known to you, that I am now a Christian, and free to fulfil Christian duties.”— “I ask your name,” said the judge; “tell me it immediately.”— “I am called Alban by my parents,” replied he; “and I worship ever and adore the true and living God, Who created all things.” Then the judge, filled with anger, said, “If you would enjoy the happiness of eternal life, do not delay to offer sacrifice to the great gods.” Alban rejoined, “These sacrifices, which by you are offered to devils, neither can avail the worshippers, nor fulfil the desires and petitions of the suppliants. Rather, whosoever shall offer sacrifice to these images, shall receive the everlasting pains of hell for his reward.”

The judge, hearing these words, and being much incensed, ordered this holy confessor of God to be scourged by the executioners, believing that he might by stripes shake that constancy of heart, on which he could not prevail by words. He, being most cruelly tortured, bore the same patiently, or rather joyfully, for our Lord’s sake. When the judge perceived that he was not to be overcome by tortures, or withdrawn from the exercise of the Christian religion, he ordered him to be put to death. Being led to execution, he came to a river, which, with a most rapid course, ran between the wall of the town and the arena where he was to be executed. He there saw a great multitude of persons of both sexes, and of divers ages and conditions, who were doubtless assembled by Divine inspiration, to attend the blessed confessor and martyr, and had so filled the bridge over the river, that he could scarce pass over that evening. In truth, almost all had gone out, so that the judge remained in the city without attendance. St. Alban, therefore, urged by an ardent and devout wish to attain the sooner to martyrdom, drew near to the stream, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, whereupon the channel was immediately dried up, and he perceived that the water had given place and made way for him to pass. Among the rest, the executioner, who should have put him to death, observed this, and moved doubtless by Divine inspiration hastened to meet him at the appointed place of execution, and casting away the sword which he had carried ready drawn, fell at his feet, praying earnestly that he might rather be accounted worthy to suffer with the martyr, whom he was ordered to execute, or, if possible, instead of him.

Whilst he was thus changed from a persecutor into a companion in the faith and truth, and the other executioners rightly hesitated to take up the sword which was lying on the ground, the holy confessor, accompanied by the

multitude, ascended a hill, about half a mile from the arena, beautiful, as was fitting, and of most pleasing appearance, adorned, or rather clothed, everywhere with flowers of many colours, nowhere steep or precipitous or of sheer descent, but with a long, smooth natural slope, like a plain, on its sides, a place altogether worthy from of old, by reason of its native beauty, to be consecrated by the blood of a blessed martyr. On the top of this hill, St. Alban prayed that God would give him water, and immediately a living spring, confined in its channel, sprang up at his feet, so that all men acknowledged that even the stream had yielded its service to the martyr. For it was impossible that the martyr, who had left no water remaining in the river, should desire it on the top of the hill, unless he thought it fitting. The river then having done service and fulfilled the pious duty, returned to its natural course, leaving a testimony of its obedience. Here, therefore, the head of the undaunted martyr was struck off, and here he received the crown of life, which God has promised to them that love him. But he who laid impious hands on the holy man's neck was not permitted to rejoice over his dead body; for his eyes dropped upon the ground at the same moment as the blessed martyr's head fell.

At the same time was also beheaded the soldier, who before, through the Divine admonition, refused to strike the holy confessor. Of whom it is apparent, that though he was not purified by the waters of baptism, yet he was cleansed by the washing of his own blood, and rendered worthy to enter the kingdom of heaven. Then the judge, astonished at the unwonted sight of so many heavenly miracles, ordered the persecution to cease immediately, and began to honour the death of the saints, by which he once thought that they might have been turned from their zeal for the Christian faith. The blessed Alban suffered death on the twenty-second day of June, near the city of Verulam, which is now by the English nation called Verlamacaestir, or Vaeclingacaestir, where afterwards, when peaceable Christian times were restored, a church of wonderful workmanship, and altogether worthy to commemorate his martyrdom, was erected. In which place the cure of sick persons and the frequent working of wonders cease not to this day.

At that time suffered Aaron and Julius, citizens of the City of Legions, and many more of both sexes in divers places; who, after that they had endured sundry torments, and their limbs had been mangled after an unheard-of manner, when their warfare was accomplished, yielded their souls up to the joys of the heavenly city.

CHAP. 8

At ubi turbo persecutionis quieuit, progressi in publicum fideles Christi, qui se tempore discriminis siluis ac desertis abditis speluncis occulerant, renouant ecclesias ad solum usque destructas, basilicas sanctorum martyrum fundant, construunt, perficiunt, ac ueluti uictricia signa passim propalant, dies festos celebrant, sacra mundo corde atque ore conficiunt. Mansitque haec in ecclesiis Christi, quae erant in Brittania, pax usque ad tempora Arrianae uesaniae, quae, corrupto orbe toto, hanc etiam insulam extra orbem tam longe remotam, ueneno sui infecit erroris; et hac quasi uia pestilentiae trans oceanum patefacta, non mora, omnis se lues hereseos cuiusque, insulae noui semper aliquid audire gaudenti, et nil certi firmiter obtinenti infudit.

His temporibus Constantius, qui uiuente Diocletiano Galliam Hispaniamque regebat, uir summae mansuetudinis et ciuilitatis, in Brittania morte obiit. Hic Constantinum filium ex concubina Helena creatum imperatorem Galliarum reliquit. Scribit autem Eutropius, quod Constantinus in Brittania creatus imperator, patri in regnum successerit; cuius temporibus Arriana heresis exorta, et in Nicena synodo detecta atque damnata, nihilominus exitiabile perfidiae suae uirus, ut diximus, non solum orbis totius, sed et insularum ecclesiis aspersit.

Chap. VIII.

How, when the persecution ceased, the Church in Britain enjoyed peace till the time of the Arian heresy.

When the storm of persecution ceased, the faithful Christians, who, during the time of danger, had hidden themselves in woods and deserts and secret caves, came forth and rebuilt the churches which had been levelled to the ground; founded, erected, and finished the cathedrals raised in honour of the holy martyrs, and, as if displaying their conquering standards in all places, celebrated festivals and performed their sacred rites with pure hearts and lips. This peace continued in the Christian churches of Britain until the time of the Arian madness, which, having corrupted the whole world, infected this island also, so far removed from the rest of the world, with the poison of its error; and when once a way was opened across the sea for that plague, straightway all the taint of every heresy fell upon the island, ever desirous to hear some new thing, and never holding firm to any sure belief.

At this time Constantius, who, whilst Diocletian was alive, governed Gaul and Spain, a man of great clemency and urbanity, died in Britain. This man left his son Constantine, born of Helena, his concubine, emperor of the Gauls. Eutropius writes that Constantine, being created emperor in Britain, succeeded his father in the sovereignty. In his time the Arian heresy broke

out, and although it was exposed and condemned in the Council of Nicaea, nevertheless, the deadly poison of its evil spread, as has been said, to the Churches in the islands, as well as to those of the rest of the world.

CHAP. 9

Anno ab incarnatione Domini CCCLXXVII, Gratianus XL ab Augusto post mortem Ualentis sex annis imperium tenuit, quamvis iamdudum antea cum patruo Ualente et cum Ualentiniano fratre regnaret. Qui cum afflictum et pene conlapsum reipublicae statum uideret, Theodosium Hispanum uirum restituendae reipublicae necessitate apud Syrmium purpura induit, Orientisque et Thraciae simul praefecit imperio. Qua tempestate Maximus uir quidem strenuus et probus, atque Augusto dignus, nisi contra sacramenti fidem per tyrannidem emersisset, in Britannia inuitus propemodum ab exercitu imperator creatus, in Galliam transiit. Ibi Gratianum Augustum subita incursione perterritum, atque in Italiam transire meditantem, dolis circumuentum interfecit, fratremque eius Ualentinianum Augustum Italia expulit. Ualentinianus in orientem fugiens, a Theodosio paterna pietate susceptus, mox etiam imperio restitutus est; clauso uidelicet intra muros Aquileiae, capto atque occiso ab eis Maximo tyranno.

Chap. IX.

How during the reign of Gratian, Maximus, being created Emperor in Britain, returned into Gaul with a mighty army.

In the year of our Lord 377, Gratian, the fortieth from Augustus, held the empire for six years after the death of Valens; though he had long before reigned with his uncle Valens, and his brother Valentinian. Finding the condition of the commonwealth much impaired, and almost gone to ruin, and impelled by the necessity of restoring it, he invested the Spaniard, Theodosius, with the purple at Sirmium, and made him emperor of Thrace and the Eastern provinces. At that time, Maximus, a man of energy and probity, and worthy of the title of Augustus, if he had not broken his oath of allegiance, was made emperor by the army somewhat against his will, passed over into Gaul, and there by treachery slew the Emperor Gratian, who in consternation at his sudden invasion, was attempting to escape into Italy. His brother, the Emperor Valentinian, expelled from Italy, fled into the East, where he was entertained by Theodosius with fatherly affection, and soon restored to the empire, for Maximus the tyrant, being shut up in Aquileia, was there taken by them and put to death.

CHAP. 10

Anno ab incarnatione Domini CCCXCIII Arcadius filius Theodosii cum fratre Honorio, XLIII ab Augusto regnum suscipiens, tenuit annos XIII. Cuius temporibus Pelagius Bretto contra auxilium gratiae supernae uenena suae perfidiae longe lateque dispersit, utens cooperatore Iuliano de Campania, quem dudum amissi episcopatus intemperans cupido exagitabat; quibus sanctus Augustinus, sicut et ceteri patres orthodoxi, multis sententiarum catholicarum milibus responderunt, nec eorum tamen dementiam corrigere ualebant; sed, quod grauius est, correpta eorum uesania magis augescere contradicendo, quam fauendo ueritati uoluit emundari. Quod pulchre uersibus heroicis Prosper rethor insinuat, cum ait:

‘Contra Augustinum narratur serpere quidam Scriptor, quem dudum liuor adurit edax.

Quis caput obscuris contectum utcumque cauernis Tollere humo miserum propulit anguiculum?

Aut hunc fruge sua aequorei pauere Britanni, Aut hic Campano gramine corda tumet.’

Chap. X.

How, in the reign of Arcadius, Pelagius, a Briton, insolently impugned the Grace of God.

In the year of our Lord 394, Arcadius, the son of Theodosius, the forty-third from Augustus, succeeding to the empire, with his brother Honorius, held it thirteen years. In his time, Pelagius, a Briton, spread far and near the infection of his perfidious doctrine, denying the assistance of the Divine grace, being seconded therein by his associate Julianus of Campania, who was impelled by an uncontrolled desire to recover his bishopric, of which he had been deprived. St. Augustine, and the other orthodox fathers, quoted many thousand catholic authorities against them, but failed to amend their folly; nay, more, their madness being rebuked was rather increased by contradiction than suffered by them to be purified through adherence to the truth; which Prosper, the rhetorician, has beautifully expressed thus in heroic verse: —

They tell that one, erewhile consumed with gnawing spite, snake-like attacked Augustine in his writings. Who urged the wretched viper to raise from the ground his head, howsoever hidden in dens of darkness? Either the sea-girt Britons reared him with the fruit of their soil, or fed on Campanian pastures his heart swells with pride.

CHAP. 11

Anno ab incarnatione Domini CCCCVII, tenente imperium Honorio Augusto, filio Theodosii minoris, loco ab Augusto X.LIIII, ante biennium Romanae inruptionis, quae per Halaricum regem Gothorum facta est, cum gentes Halanorum, Sueuorum, Uandalorum, multaeque cum his aliae, protritris Francis, transito Hreno, totas per Gallias saeuirent, apud Britannias Gratianus municeps tyrannus creatur, et occiditur. Huius loco Constantinus ex infima militia propter solam spem nominis sine merito uirtutis eligitur; qui continuo, ut inuasit imperium, in Gallias transiit. Ibi saepe a barbaris incertis foederibus inlusus, detrimento magis reipublicae fuit; unde mox, iubente Honorio, Constantius comes in Galliam cum exercitu profectus, apud Arelatem ciuitatem eum clausit, cepit, occidit;

Constantemque filium eius, quem ex monacho Caesarem fecerat, Gerontius comes suos apud Uiennam interfecit.

Fracta est autem Roma a Gothis anno milesimo CLXIII suae conditionis, ex quo tempore Romani in Britannia regnare cessarunt, post annos ferme CCCCLXX, ex quo Gaius Iulius Caesar eandem insulam adiit. Habitant autem intra uallum, quod Seuerum trans insulam fecisse commemorauimus, ad plagam meridianam, quod ciuitates, farus, pontes, et stratae ibidem factae usque hodie testantur; ceterum ultiores Britanniae partes, uel eas etiam, quae ultra Britanniam sunt, insulas iure dominandi possidebant.

Chap. XI.

How during the reign of Honorius, Gratian and Constantine were created tyrants in Britain; and soon after the former was slain in Britain, and the latter in Gaul.

In the year of our Lord 407, Honorius, the younger son of Theodosius, and the forty-fourth from Augustus, being emperor, two years before the invasion of Rome by Alaric, king of the Goths, when the nations of the Alani, Suevi, Vandals, and many others with them, having defeated the Franks and passed the Rhine, ravaged all Gaul, Gratianus, a citizen of the country, was set up as tyrant in Britain and killed. In his place, Constantine, one of the meanest soldiers, only for the hope afforded by his name, and without any worth to recommend him, was chosen emperor. As soon as he had taken upon him the command, he crossed over into Gaul, where being often imposed upon by the barbarians with untrustworthy treaties, he did more harm than good to the Commonwealth. Whereupon Count Constantius, by the command of Honorius, marching into Gaul with an army, besieged him in the city of Arles, took him prisoner, and put him to death. His son Constans, a monk, whom he had created Caesar, was also put to death by his own follower Count

Gerontius, at Vienne.

Rome was taken by the Goths, in the year from its foundation, 1164. Then the Romans ceased to rule in Britain, almost 470 years after Caius Julius Caesar came to the island. They dwelt within the rampart, which, as we have mentioned, Severus made across the island, on the south side of it, as the cities, watch-towers, bridges, and paved roads there made testify to this day; but they had a right of dominion over the farther parts of Britain, as also over the islands that are beyond Britain.

CHAP. 12

Exin Brittania in parte Brettonum, omni armato milite, militaribus copiis uniuersis, tota floridæ iuuentutis alacritate spoliata, quæ tyrannorum temeritate abducta nusquam ultra domum rediit, prædæ tantum patuit, utpote omnis bellici usus prorsus ignara; denique subito duabus gentibus transmarinis uehementer saeuis, Scottorum a circio, Pictorum ab aquilone, multos stupet gemitque per annos. Transmarinas autem dicimus has gentes, non quod extra Britanniam essent positæ; sed quia a parte Brettonum erant remotæ, duobus sinibus maris interiacentibus, quorum unus ab orientali mari, alter ab occidentali, Britanniae terras longe lateque inrumpit, quamuis ad se inuicem pertingere non possint.

Orientalis habet in medio sui urbem Giudi, occidentalis supra se, hoc est ad dexteram sui, habet urbem Alcluith, quod lingua eorum significat petram Cluith; est enim iuxta fluuium nominis illius.

Ob harum ergo infestationem gentium Brettones legatos Romam cum epistulis mittentes, lacrimosis precibus auxilia flagitabant, subiectionemque continuam, dummodo hostis imminens longius arceretur, promittebant. Quibus mox legio destinatur armata, quæ, ubi insulam aduecta, et congressa est cum hostibus, magnam eorum multitudinem sternens, ceteros sociorum finibus expulit; eosque interim a dirissima depressione liberatos, hortata est instruere inter duo maria trans insulam murum, qui arcendis hostibus posset esse praesidio; sicque domum cum triumpho magno reuersa est. At insulani murum, quem iussi fuerant, non tam lapidibus quam cespitibus construentes, utpote nullum tanti operis artificem habentes, ad nihil utilem statuunt. Fecerunt autem eum inter duo freta uel sinus, de quibus diximus, maris, per milia passuum plurima; ut, ubi aquarum munitio deerat, ibi praesidio ualli fines suos ab hostium inruptione defenderent. Cuius operis ibidem facti, id est ualli latissimi et altissimi, usque hodie certissima uestigia cernere licet. Incipit autem duorum ferme milium spatio a monasterio Aebbercurnig ad occidentem in loco, qui sermone Pictorum Peanfahel, lingua autem Anglorum Penneltun appellatur; et tendens contra occidentem terminatur iuxta urbem Alcluith.

Uerum priores inimici, ut Romanum militem abisse conspexerant, mox aduecti nauibus inrumpunt terminos, caeduntque omnia, et quasi maturam segetem obuia quæque metunt, calcant, transeunt; unde rursum mittuntur Romam legati, flebili uoce auxilium inplorantes, ne penitus misera patria deleretur, ne nomen Romanae prouinciæ, quod apud eos tam diu claruerat, exterarum gentium improbitate obrutum uilesceret. Rursum mittitur legio, quæ inopinata tempore autumnii adueniens, magnas hostium strages dedit, eosque, qui euadere poterant, omnes trans maria fugauit, qui prius anniuersarias prædas trans maria nullo obsistente cogere solebant.

Tum Romani denuntiauere Brettonibus non se ultra ob eorum defensionem

tam laboriosis expeditionibus posse fatigari; ipsos potius monent arma corripere, et certandi cum hostibus studium subire, qui non aliam ob causam, quam si ipsi inertia soluerentur, eis possent esse fortiores. Quin etiam, quia et hoc sociis, quos derelinquere cogeantur, aliquid commodi adlaturum putabant, murum a mari ad mare recto tramite inter urbes, quae ibidem ob metum hostium factae fuerant, ubi et Seuerus quondam uallum fecerat, firmo de lapide conlocarunt; quem uidelicet murum hactenus famosum atque conspicuum, sumtu publico priuatoque, adiuncta secum Brittanorum manu, construebant, VIII pedes latum, et XII altum, recta ab oriente in occasum linea, ut usque hodie intuentibus clarum est; quo mox condito dant fortia segni populo monita, praebent instituendorum exemplaria armorum. Sed et in litore oceani ad meridiem, quo naues eorum habebantur, quia et inde barbarorum inruptio timebatur, turres per interualla ad prospectum maris conlocant, et ualedicunt sociis tanquam ultra non reuersuri.

Quibus ad sua remeantibus, cognita Scotti Pictique reditus denegatione, redeunt confestim ipsi, et solito confidentiores facti, omnem aquilonalem extremamque insulae partem pro indigenis ad murum usque capessunt. Statuitur ad haec in edito arcis acies segnis, ubi trementi corde stupida die noctuque marcebat. At contra non cessant uncinata hostium tela; ignaui propugnatores miserrime de muris tracti solo adlidebantur. Quid plura? relictis ciuitatibus ac muro fugiunt, disperguntur. Insequitur hostis, adcelerantur strages cunctis crudeliores prioribus. Sicut enim agni a feris, ita miseri ciues discerpuntur ab hostibus; unde a mansionibus ac possessiunculis suis eiecti, imminens sibi famis periculum latrocinio ac rapacitate mutua temperabant, augentes externas domesticis motibus clades, donec omnis regio totius cibi sustentaculo, excepto uenandi solacio, uacuaretur.

Chap. XII.

How the Britons, being ravaged by the Scots and Picts, sought succour from the Romans, who coming a second time, built a wall across the island; but when this was broken down at once by the aforesaid enemies, they were reduced to greater distress than before.

From that time, the British part of Britain, destitute of armed soldiers, of all military stores, and of the whole flower of its active youth, who had been led away by the rashness of the tyrants never to return, was wholly exposed to rapine, the people being altogether ignorant of the use of weapons. Whereupon they suffered many years from the sudden invasions of two very savage nations from beyond the sea, the Scots from the west, and the Picts from the north. We call these nations from beyond the sea, not on account of their being seated out of Britain, but because they were separated from that part of it which was possessed by the Britons, two broad and long inlets of the sea lying between them, one of which runs into the interior of Britain, from

the Eastern Sea, and the other from the Western, though they do not reach so far as to touch one another. The eastern has in the midst of it the city Giudi. On the Western Sea, that is, on its right shore, stands the city of Alcluith, which in their language signifies the Rock Cluith, for it is close by the river of that name.

On account of the attacks of these nations, the Britons sent messengers to Rome with letters piteously praying for succour, and promising perpetual subjection, provided that the impending enemy should be driven away. An armed legion was immediately sent them, which, arriving in the island, and engaging the enemy, slew a great multitude of them, drove the rest out of the territories of their allies, and having in the meanwhile delivered them from their worst distress, advised them to build a wall between the two seas across the island, that it might secure them by keeping off the enemy. So they returned home with great triumph. But the islanders building the wall which they had been told to raise, not of stone, since they had no workmen capable of such a work, but of sods, made it of no use. Nevertheless, they carried it for many miles between the two bays or inlets of the sea of which we have spoken; to the end that where the protection of the water was wanting, they might use the rampart to defend their borders from the irruptions of the enemies. Of the work there erected, that is, of a rampart of great breadth and height, there are evident remains to be seen at this day. It begins at about two miles' distance from the monastery of Aebbercurnig, west of it, at a place called in the Pictish language Peanfahel, but in the English tongue, Penneltun, and running westward, ends near the city of Alcluith.

But the former enemies, when they perceived that the Roman soldiers were gone, immediately coming by sea, broke into the borders, trampled and overran all places, and like men mowing ripe corn, bore down all before them. Hereupon messengers were again sent to Rome miserably imploring aid, lest their wretched country should be utterly blotted out, and the name of a Roman province, so long renowned among them, overthrown by the cruelties of foreign races, might become utterly contemptible. A legion was accordingly sent again, and, arriving unexpectedly in autumn, made great slaughter of the enemy, obliging all those that could escape, to flee beyond the sea; whereas before, they were wont yearly to carry off their booty without any opposition. Then the Romans declared to the Britons, that they could not for the future undertake such troublesome expeditions for their sake, and advised them rather to take up arms and make an effort to engage their enemies, who could not prove too powerful for them, unless they themselves were enervated by cowardice. Moreover, thinking that it might be some help to the allies, whom they were forced to abandon, they constructed a strong stone wall from sea to sea, in a straight line between the towns that had been there built for fear of the enemy, where Severus also had formerly built a rampart. This famous wall, which is still to be seen, was raised at public and private expense, the

Britons also lending their assistance. It is eight feet in breadth, and twelve in height, in a straight line from east to west, as is still evident to beholders. This being presently finished, they gave the dispirited people good advice, and showed them how to furnish themselves with arms. Besides, they built towers to command a view of the sea, at intervals, on the southern coast, where their ships lay, because there also the invasions of the barbarians were apprehended, and so took leave of their allies, never to return again.

After their departure to their own country, the Scots and Picts, understanding that they had refused to return, at once came back, and growing more confident than they had been before, occupied all the northern and farthest part of the island, driving out the natives, as far as the wall. Hereupon a timorous guard was placed upon the fortification, where, dazed with fear, they became ever more dispirited day by day. On the other side, the enemy constantly attacked them with barbed weapons, by which the cowardly defenders were dragged in piteous fashion from the wall, and dashed against the ground. At last, the Britons, forsaking their cities and wall, took to flight and were scattered. The enemy pursued, and forthwith followed a massacre more grievous than ever before; for the wretched natives were torn in pieces by their enemies, as lambs are torn by wild beasts. Thus, being expelled from their dwellings and lands, they saved themselves from the immediate danger of starvation by robbing and plundering one another, adding to the calamities inflicted by the enemy their own domestic broils, till the whole country was left destitute of food except such as could be procured in the chase.

CHAP. 13

Anno dominicae incarnationis CCCCXXIII, Theodosius iunior post Honorium XLV ab Augusto regnum suscipiens, XX et VI annis tenuit;

cuius anno imperii VIII Palladius ad Scottos in Christum credentes a pontifice Romanae ecclesiae Celestino primus mittitur episcopus.

Anno autem regni eius XXIII, Aetius uir inlustris, qui et patricius fuit, tertium cum Simmacho gessit consulatum. Ad hunc pauperculae Brettonum reliquiae mittunt epistolam, cuius hoc principium est: ‘Aetio ter consuli gemitus Brittanorum;’ et in processu epistolae ita suas calamitates explicant: ‘Repellunt barbari ad mare, repellit mare ad barbaros; inter haec oriuntur duo genera funerum, aut iugulamur, aut mergimur.’ Neque haec tamen agentes quicquam ab illo auxilii impetrare quierunt, utpote qui grauissimis eo tempore bellis cum Blaedla et Attila regibus Hunorum erat occupatus; et quamuis anno ante hunc proximo Blaedla Attilae fratris sui sit interemtus insidiis, Attila tamen ipse adeo intolerabilis reipublicae remansit hostis, ut totam pene Europam, excisis inuasisque ciuitatibus atque castellis, conroderet. Quin et hisdem temporibus fames Constantinopolim inuasit; nec mora pestis secuta est; sed et plurimi eiusdem urbis muri cum LVII turribus conruerunt;

multis quoque ciuitatibus conlapsis, fames et aerum pestifer odor plura hominum milia iumentorumque deleuit.

Chap. XIII.

How in the reign of Theodosius the younger, in whose time Palladius was sent to the Scots that believed in Christ, the Britons begging assistance of Ætius, the consul, could not obtain it. [446 a.d.]

In the year of our Lord 423, Theodosius, the younger, the forty-fifth from Augustus, succeeded Honorius and governed the Roman empire twenty-six years. In the eighth year of his reign, Palladius was sent by Celestinus, the Roman pontiff, to the Scots that believed in Christ, to be their first bishop. In the twenty-third year of his reign, Aetius, a man of note and a patrician, discharged his third consulship with Symmachus for his colleague. To him the wretched remnant of the Britons sent a letter, which began thus:— “To Aetius, thrice Consul, the groans of the Britons.” And in the sequel of the letter they thus unfolded their woes:— “The barbarians drive us to the sea; the sea drives us back to the barbarians: between them we are exposed to two sorts of death; we are either slaughtered or drowned.” Yet, for all this, they could not obtain any help from him, as he was then engaged in most serious wars with Bledla and Attila, kings of the Huns. And though the year before this Bledla had been murdered by the treachery of his own brother Attila, yet Attila himself remained so intolerable an enemy to the Republic, that he

ravaged almost all Europe, attacking and destroying cities and castles. At the same time there was a famine at Constantinople, and soon after a plague followed; moreover, a great part of the wall of that city, with fifty-seven towers, fell to the ground. Many cities also went to ruin, and the famine and pestilential state of the air destroyed thousands of men and cattle.

CHAP. 14

Interea Brettones famas sua praefata magis magisque adficiens, ac famam suae malitiae posteris diuturnam relinquens, multos eorum coegit uictas infestis praedonibus dare manus, alios uero numquam, quin potius confidentes in diuinum, ubi humanum cessabat auxilium, de ipsis montibus, speluncis, ac saltibus continue rebellabant; et tum primum inimicis, qui per multos annos praedas in terra agebant, strages dare coeperunt. Reuertuntur ergo inpudentes grassatores Hiberni domus, post non longum tempus reuersuri; Picti in extrema parte insulae tunc primum et deinceps quieuerunt, praedas tamen nonnumquam exinde et contritiones de Brettonum gente agere non cessarunt.

Cessante autem uastatione hostili, tantis frugum copiis insula, quantas nulla retro aetas meminit, affluere coepit; cum quibus et luxuria crescere, et hanc continuo omnium lues scelerum comitari adcelerauit; crudelitas praecipue, et odium ueritatis, amorque mendacii, ita ut, siquis eorum mitior et ueritati aliquatenus propior uideretur, in hunc quasi Britanniae subuersorem omnium odia telaque sine respectu contorquerentur. Et non solum haec saeculares uiri, sed etiam ipse grex Domini eiusque pastores egerunt;

ebrietati, animositati, litigio, contentioni, inuidiae, ceterisque huiusmodi facinoribus sua colla, abiecto leui iugo Christi, subdentes. Interea subito corruptae mentis homines acerba pestis corripuit, quae in breui tantam eius multitudinem strauit, ut ne sepeliendis quidem mortuis uiui sufficerent; sed ne morte quidem suorum, nec timore mortis hi, qui supererant, a morte animae, qua peccando sternebantur, reuocari poterant. Unde non multo post acrior gentem peccatricem ultio diri sceleris secuta est. Initum namque est consilium, quid agendum, ubi quaerendum esset praesidium ad euitandas uel repellendas tam feras tamque creberrimas gentium aquilonalium inruptiones; placuitque omnibus cum suo rege Uurtigerno, ut Saxonum gentem de transmarinis partibus in auxilium uocarent; quod Domini nutu dispositum esse constat, ut ueniret contra improbos malum, sicut euidentius rerum exitus probauit.

Chap. XIV.

How the Britons, compelled by the great famine, drove the barbarians out of their territories; and soon after there ensued, along with abundance of corn, decay of morals, pestilence, and the downfall of the nation.

In the meantime, the aforesaid famine distressing the Britons more and more, and leaving to posterity a lasting memory of its mischievous effects, obliged many of them to submit themselves to the depredators; though others still held out, putting their trust in God, when human help failed. These continually

made raids from the mountains, caves, and woods, and, at length, began to inflict severe losses on their enemies, who had been for so many years plundering the country. The bold Irish robbers thereupon returned home, intending to come again before long. The Picts then settled down in the farthest part of the island and afterwards remained there, but they did not fail to plunder and harass the Britons from time to time.

Now, when the ravages of the enemy at length abated, the island began to abound with such plenty of grain as had never been known in any age before; along with plenty, evil living increased, and this was immediately attended by the taint of all manner of crime; in particular, cruelty, hatred of truth, and love of falsehood; insomuch, that if any one among them happened to be milder than the rest, and more inclined to truth, all the rest abhorred and persecuted him unrestrainedly, as if he had been the enemy of Britain. Nor were the laity only guilty of these things, but even our Lord's own flock, with its shepherds, casting off the easy yoke of Christ, gave themselves up to drunkenness, enmity, quarrels, strife, envy, and other such sins. In the meantime, on a sudden, a grievous plague fell upon that corrupt generation, which soon destroyed such numbers of them, that the living scarcely availed to bury the dead: yet, those that survived, could not be recalled from the spiritual death, which they had incurred through their sins, either by the death of their friends, or the fear of death. Whereupon, not long after, a more severe vengeance for their fearful crimes fell upon the sinful nation. They held a council to determine what was to be done, and where they should seek help to prevent or repel the cruel and frequent incursions of the northern nations; and in concert with their King Vortigern, it was unanimously decided to call the Saxons to their aid from beyond the sea, which, as the event plainly showed, was brought about by the Lord's will, that evil might fall upon them for their wicked deeds.

CHAP. 15

Anno ab incarnatione Domini CCCCXLVIII Marcius cum Ualentiniano XLVI ab Augusto regnum adeptus, VII annis tenuit. Tunc Anglorum siue Saxonum gens, inuitata a rege praefato, Britanniam tribus longis nauibus aduehitur, et in orientali parte insulae, iubente eodem rege, locum manendi, quasi pro patria pugnatura, re autem uera hanc expugnatura, suscipit. Inito ergo certamine cum hostibus, qui ab aquilone ad aciem uenerant, uictoriam sumserunt Saxones. Quod ubi domi nuntiatum est, simul et insulae fertilitas, ac segnitia Brettonum; mittitur confestim illo classis prolixior, armatorum ferens manum fortiolem, quae praemissae adiuncta cohorti inuincibilem fecit exercitum. Susceperunt ergo, qui aduenerant, donantibus Britannis, locum habitationis inter eos, ea condicione, ut hi pro patriae pace et salute contra aduersarios militarent, illi militantibus debita stipendia conferrent.

Aduenerant autem de tribus Germaniae populis fortioribus, id est Saxonibus, Anglis, Iutis. De Iutarum origine sunt Cantuarii et Uictuarii, hoc est ea gens, quae Uectam tenet insulam, et ea, quae usque hodie in prouincia Occidentalium Saxonum Iutarum natio nominatur, posita contra ipsam insulam Uectam. De Saxonibus, id est ea regione, quae nunc Antiquorum Saxonum cognominatur, uenere Orientales Saxones, Meridiani Saxones, Occidui Saxones. Porro de Anglis, hoc est de illa patria, quae Angulus dicitur, et ab eo tempore usque hodie manere desertus inter prouincias Iutarum et Saxonum perhibetur, Orientales Angli, Mediterranei Angli, Mercii, tota Nordanhymbrorum progenies, id est illarum gentium, quae ad Boream Humbri fluminis inhabitant, ceterique Anglorum populi sunt orti. Duces fuisse perhibentur eorum primi duo fratres Hengist et Horsa; e quibus Horsa postea occisus in bello a Brettonibus, hactenus in orientalibus Cantiae partibus monumentum habet suo nomine insigne. Erant autem filii Uictgilsii, cuius pater Uitta, cuius pater Uecta, cuius pater Uoden, de cuius stirpe multarum prouinciarum regum genus originem duxit.

Non mora ergo, confluentibus certatim in insulam gentium memoratarum cateruis, grandescere populus coepit aduenarum, ita ut ipsis quoque, qui eos aduocauerant, indigenis essent terrori. Tum subito inito ad tempus foedere cum Pictis, quos longius iam bellando pepulerant, in socios arma uertere incipiunt. Et primum quidem annonae sibi eos affluentius ministrare cogunt, quaerentesque occasionem diuortii, protestantur, nisi profusior sibi alimentorum copia daretur, se cuncta insulae loca rupto foedere uastaturos. Neque aliquanto segnius minas effectibus prosequuntur. Siquidem, ut breuiter dicam, accensus manibus paganorum ignis, iustas de sceleribus populi Dei ultiones expetiit, non illius inpar, qui quondam a Chaldaeis succensus, Hierosolymorum moenia, immo aedificia cuncta consumpsit.

Sic enim et hic agente impio uictore, immo disponente iusto Iudice,

proximas quasque ciuitates agrosque depopulans, ab orientali mari usque ad occidentale, nullo prohibente, suum continuauit incendium, totamque prope insulae pereuntis superficiem obtexit. Ruebant aedificia publica simul et priuata, passim sacerdotes inter altaria trucidabantur, praesules cum populis sine ullo respectu honoris, ferro pariter et flammis absumebantur; nec erat, qui crudeliter interemtis sepulturae traderet. Itaque nonnulli de miserandis reliquiis in montibus comprehensi, acruatim iugulabantur; alii fame confecti procedentes manus hostibus dabant, pro accipiendis alimentorum subsidiis aeternum subituri seruitium, si tamen non continuo trucidarentur; alii transmarinas regiones dolentes petebant; alii perstantes in patria trepidi pauperem uitam in montibus, siluis, uel rupibus arduis suspecta semper mente agebant.

Chap. XV.

How the Angles, being invited into Britain, at first drove off the enemy; but not long after, making a league with them, turned their weapons against their allies.

In the year of our Lord 449, Marcian, the forty-sixth from Augustus, being made emperor with Valentinian, ruled the empire seven years. Then the nation of the Angles, or Saxons, being invited by the aforesaid king, arrived in Britain with three ships of war and had a place in which to settle assigned to them by the same king, in the eastern part of the island, on the pretext of fighting in defence of their country, whilst their real intentions were to conquer it. Accordingly they engaged with the enemy, who were come from the north to give battle, and the Saxons obtained the victory. When the news of their success and of the fertility of the country, and the cowardice of the Britons, reached their own home, a more considerable fleet was quickly sent over, bringing a greater number of men, and these, being added to the former army, made up an invincible force. The newcomers received of the Britons a place to inhabit among them, upon condition that they should wage war against their enemies for the peace and security of the country, whilst the Britons agreed to furnish them with pay. Those who came over were of the three most powerful nations of Germany — Saxons, Angles, and Jutes. From the Jutes are descended the people of Kent, and of the Isle of Wight, including those in the province of the West-Saxons who are to this day called Jutes, seated opposite to the Isle of Wight. From the Saxons, that is, the country which is now called Old Saxony, came the East-Saxons, the South-Saxons, and the West-Saxons. From the Angles, that is, the country which is called Angulus, and which is said, from that time, to have remained desert to this day, between the provinces of the Jutes and the Saxons, are descended the East-Angles, the Midland-Angles, the Mercians, all the race of the Northumbrians, that is, of those nations that dwell on the north side of the river Humber, and the other nations of the Angles. The first commanders are

said to have been the two brothers Hengist and Horsa. Of these Horsa was afterwards slain in battle by the Britons, and a monument, bearing his name, is still in existence in the eastern parts of Kent. They were the sons of Victgilsus, whose father was Vitta, son of Vecta, son of Woden; from whose stock the royal race of many provinces trace their descent. In a short time, swarms of the aforesaid nations came over into the island, and the foreigners began to increase so much, that they became a source of terror to the natives themselves who had invited them. Then, having on a sudden entered into league with the Picts, whom they had by this time repelled by force of arms, they began to turn their weapons against their allies. At first, they obliged them to furnish a greater quantity of provisions; and, seeking an occasion of quarrel, protested, that unless more plentiful supplies were brought them, they would break the league, and ravage all the island; nor were they backward in putting their threats into execution. In short, the fire kindled by the hands of the pagans, proved God's just vengeance for the crimes of the people; not unlike that which, being of old lighted by the Chaldeans, consumed the walls and all the buildings of Jerusalem. For here, too, through the agency of the pitiless conqueror, yet by the disposal of the just Judge, it ravaged all the neighbouring cities and country, spread the conflagration from the eastern to the western sea, without any opposition, and overran the whole face of the doomed island. Public as well as private buildings were overturned; the priests were everywhere slain before the altars; no respect was shown for office, the prelates with the people were destroyed with fire and sword; nor were there any left to bury those who had been thus cruelly slaughtered. Some of the miserable remnant, being taken in the mountains, were butchered in heaps. Others, spent with hunger, came forth and submitted themselves to the enemy, to undergo for the sake of food perpetual servitude, if they were not killed upon the spot. Some, with sorrowful hearts, fled beyond the seas. Others, remaining in their own country, led a miserable life of terror and anxiety of mind among the mountains, woods and crags.

CHAP. 16

At ubi hostilis exercitus exterminatis dispersisque insulae indigenis, domum reuersus est, coeperunt et illi paulatim uires animosque resumere, emergentes de latibulis, quibus abditi fuerant, et unanimo consensu auxilium caeleste precantes, ne usque ad internicionem usquequaque delerentur. Utebantur eo tempore duce Ambrosio Aureliano, uiro modesto, qui solus forte Romanae gentis praefatae tempestati superfuerat, occisis in eadem parentibus regium nomen et insigne ferentibus. Hoc ergo duce uires capessunt Brettones, et uictores prouocantes ad proelium, uictoriam ipsi Deo fauente suscipiunt. Et ex eo tempore nunc ciues, nunc hostes uincebant, usque ad annum obsessionis Badonici montis, quando non minimas eisdem hostibus strages dabant, XLmo circiter et IIIIo anno aduentus eorum in Britanniam. Sed haec postmodum.

Chap. XVI.

How the Britons obtained their first victory over the Angles, under the command of Ambrosius, a Roman.

When the army of the enemy, having destroyed and dispersed the natives, had returned home to their own settlements, the Britons began by degrees to take heart, and gather strength, sallying out of the lurking places where they had concealed themselves, and with one accord imploring the Divine help, that they might not utterly be destroyed. They had at that time for their leader, Ambrosius Aurelianus, a man of worth, who alone, by chance, of the Roman nation had survived the storm, in which his parents, who were of the royal race, had perished. Under him the Britons revived, and offering battle to the victors, by the help of God, gained the victory. From that day, sometimes the natives, and sometimes their enemies, prevailed, till the year of the siege of Badon-hill, when they made no small slaughter of those enemies, about forty-four years after their arrival in England. But of this hereafter.

CHAP. 17

Ante paucos sane aduentus eorum annos heresis Pelagiana per Agricolam inlata, Seueriani episcopi Pelagiani filium, fidem Britanniarum feda peste commaculauerat. Uerum Britanni, cum neque suscipere dogma peruersum gratiam Christi blasphemando ullatenus uellent, neque uersutiam nefariae persuasionis refutare uerbis certando sufficerent, inueniunt salubre consilium, ut a Gallicanis antistitibus auxilium belli spiritualis inquirant. Quam ob causam collecta magna synodo quaerebatur in commune, qui illic ad succurrendum fidei mitti deberent; atque omnium iudicio electi sunt apostolici sacerdotes Germanus Autissidorensis et Lupus Trecasenae ciuitatis episcopi, qui ad confirmandam fidem gratiae caelestis Britannias uenirent. Qui cum prompta deuotione preces et iussa sanctae ecclesiae suscepissent, intrant oceanum et usque ad medium itineris, quo a Gallico sinu Britannias usque tenditur, secundis flatibus naus tuta uolabat. Tum subito occurrit pergentibus inimica uis daemonum, qui tantos talesque uiros ad recuperandam tendere populorum salutem inuiderent; concitant procellas, caelum diemque nubium nocte subducunt; uentorum furores uela non sustinent;

cedebant ministeria uicta nautarum; ferebatur nauigium oratione, non uiribus; et casu dux ipse uel pontifex fractus corpore, lassitudine ac sopore resolutus est. Tum uero, quasi repugnatore cessante, tempestas excitata conualuit, et iam nauigium superfusus fluctibus mergebatur. Tum beatus Lupus omnesque turbati excitant seniore elementis furentibus obponendum; qui periculi inmanitate constantior, Christum inuocat, et adsumto in nomine sanctae Trinitatis leui aquae spargine fluctus saeuientes obprimit, collegam commonet, hortatur uniuersos, oratio uno ore et clamore profunditur;

adest diuinitas, fugantur inimici, tranquillitas serena subsequitur, uenti e contrario ad itineris ministeria reuertuntur, decursisque breui spatiis pelagi, optati littoris quiete potiuntur. Ibi conueniens ex diuersis partibus multitudo excepit sacerdotes, quos uenturos etiam uaticinatio aduersa praedixerat. Nuntiabant enim sinistri spiritus, quod timebant, qui imperio sacerdotum dum ab obsessis corporibus detruduntur, et tempestatis ordinem, et pericula, quae intulerant, fatebantur, uictosque se eorum meritis et imperio non negabant.

Interea Britanniarum insulam apostolici sacerdotes raptim opinione, praedicatione, uirtutibus impleuerunt; diuinusque per eos sermo cotidie non solum in ecclesiis, uerum etiam per triuia, per rura praedicabatur; ita ut passim et fideles catholici firmarentur, et deprauati uiam correctionis agnoscerent. Erat illis apostolorum instar et gloria et auctoritas per conscientiam, doctrina per litteras, uirtutes ex meritis. Itaque regionis uniuersitas in eorum sententiam prompta transierat. Latebant abditi sinistrae persuasionis auctores, et more maligni spiritus, gemebant perire sibi populos euadentes; ad extremum, diuturna meditatione concepta, praesumunt inire conflictum. Procedunt

conspicui diuitiis, ueste fulgentes, circumdati adsentatione multorum; discrimenque certaminis subire maluerunt, quam in populo, quem subuerterant, pudorem taciturnitatis incurrere, ne uiderentur se ipsi silentio damnauisse. Illic plane immensa multitudo etiam cum coniugibus ac liberis excita conuenerat, aderat populus expectator, futurus et iudex, adstant partes dispari condicione dissimiles; hinc diuina fides, inde humana praesumptio; hinc pietas, inde superbia: inde Pelagius auctor, hinc Christus. Primo in loco beatissimi sacerdotes praebuerunt aduersariis copiam disputandi, quae sola nuditate uerborum diu inaniter et aures occupauit, et tempora; deinde antistites uenerandi torrentes eloquii sui cum apostolicis et euangelicis imbribus profuderunt; miscebatur sermo proprius cum diuino, et adsertiones molestissimas lectionum testimonia sequebantur. Conuincitur uanitas, perfidia confutatur; ita ut ad singulas uerborum obiectiones errare se, dum respondere nequirit, fateretur; populus arbiter uix manus continet, iudicium tamen clamore testatur.

Chap. XVII.

How Germanus the Bishop, sailing into Britain with Lupus, first quelled the tempest of the sea, and afterwards that of the Pelagians, by Divine power. [429 a.d.]

Some few years before their arrival, the Pelagian heresy, brought over by Agricola, the son of Severianus, a Pelagian bishop, had corrupted with its foul taint the faith of the Britons. But whereas they absolutely refused to embrace that perverse doctrine, and blaspheme the grace of Christ, yet were not able of themselves to confute the subtilty of the unholy belief by force of argument, they bethought them of wholesome counsels and determined to crave aid of the Gallican prelates in that spiritual warfare. Hereupon, these, having assembled a great synod, consulted together to determine what persons should be sent thither to sustain the faith, and by unanimous consent, choice was made of the apostolic prelates, Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, and Lupus of Troyes, to go into Britain to confirm the people's faith in the grace of God. With ready zeal they complied with the request and commands of the Holy Church, and put to sea. The ship sped safely with favouring winds till they were halfway between the coast of Gaul and Britain. There on a sudden they were obstructed by the malevolence of demons, who were jealous that men of such eminence and piety should be sent to bring back the people to salvation. They raised storms, and darkened the sky with clouds. The sails could not support the fury of the winds, the sailors' skill was forced to give way, the ship was sustained by prayer, not by strength, and as it happened, their spiritual leader and bishop, being spent with weariness, had fallen asleep. Then, as if because resistance flagged, the tempest gathered strength, and the ship, overwhelmed by the waves, was ready to sink. Then the blessed Lupus and all the rest, greatly troubled, awakened their elder, that he might oppose

the raging elements. He, showing himself the more resolute in proportion to the greatness of the danger, called upon Christ, and having, in the name of the Holy Trinity, taken and sprinkled a little water, quelled the raging waves, admonished his companion, encouraged all, and all with one consent uplifted their voices in prayer. Divine help was granted, the enemies were put to flight, a cloudless calm ensued, the winds veering about set themselves again to forward their voyage, the sea was soon traversed, and they reached the quiet of the wished-for shore. A multitude flocking thither from all parts, received the bishops, whose coming had been foretold by the predictions even of their adversaries. For the evil spirits declared their fear, and when the bishops expelled them from the bodies of the possessed, they made known the nature of the tempest, and the dangers they had occasioned, and confessed that they had been overcome by the merits and authority of these men.

In the meantime the bishops speedily filled the island of Britain with the fame of their preaching and miracles; and the Word of God was by them daily preached, not only in the churches, but even in the streets and fields, so that the faithful and Catholic were everywhere confirmed, and those who had been perverted accepted the way of amendment. Like the Apostles, they acquired honour and authority through a good conscience, learning through the study of letters, and the power of working miracles through their merits. Thus the whole country readily came over to their way of thinking; the authors of the erroneous belief kept themselves in hiding, and, like evil spirits, grieved for the loss of the people that were rescued from them. At length, after long deliberation, they had the boldness to enter the lists. They came forward in all the splendour of their wealth, with gorgeous apparel, and supported by a numerous following; choosing rather to hazard the contest, than to undergo among the people whom they had led astray, the reproach of having been silenced, lest they should seem by saying nothing to condemn themselves. An immense multitude had been attracted thither with their wives and children. The people were present as spectators and judges; the two parties stood there in very different case; on the one side was Divine faith, on the other human presumption; on the one side piety, on the other pride; on the one side Pelagius, the founder of their faith, on the other Christ. The blessed bishops permitted their adversaries to speak first, and their empty speech long took up the time and filled the ears with meaningless words. Then the venerable prelates poured forth the torrent of their eloquence and showered upon them the words of Apostles and Evangelists, mingling the Scriptures with their own discourse and supporting their strongest assertions by the testimony of the written Word. Vainglory was vanquished and unbelief refuted; and the heretics, at every argument put before them, not being able to reply, confessed their errors. The people, giving judgement, could scarce refrain from violence, and signified their verdict by their acclamations.

CHAP. 18

Tum subito quidam tribuniciae potestatis cum coniuge procedit in medium, filiam X annorum caecam curandam sacerdotibus offerens, quam illi aduersariis offerri praeceperunt; sed hi conscientia puniente deterriti, iungunt cum parentibus preces, et curationem paruulae a sacerdotibus deprecantur; qui inclinatos animo aduersarios intuentes, orationem breuiter fundunt, ac deinde Germanus plenus Spiritu Sancto inuocat Trinitatem; nec mora, adherentem lateri suo capsulam cum sanctorum reliquiis collo auulsam manibus comprehendit, eamque in conspectu omnium puellae oculis adplicauit, quos statim euacuatos tenebris lumen ueritatis impleuit.

Exultant parentes, miraculum populus contremescit; post quam diem ita ex animis omnium suasio iniqua deleta est, ut sacerdotum doctrinam sitientibus desideriis sectarentur.

Compressa itaque peruersitate damnabili, eiusque auctoribus confutatis, atque animis omnium fidei puritate compositis, sacerdotes beatum Albanum martyrem, acturi Deo per ipsum gratias, petierunt, ubi Germanus omnium apostolorum diuersorumque martyrum secum reliquias habens, facta oratione, iussit reuelli sepulchrum, pretiosa ibidem munera conditurus; arbitrans opportunum, ut membra sanctorum ex diuersis regionibus collecta, quos pares meritis receperat caelum, sepulchri quoque unius teneret hospitium. Quibus depositis honorifice atque sociatis, de loco ipso, ubi beati martyris effusus erat sanguis, massam pulueris secum portaturus abstulit, in qua apparebat, cruore seruato, rubuisse martyrum aedem, persecutore pallente. Quibus ita gestis, innumera hominum eodem die ad Dominum turba conuersa est.

Chap. XVIII.

How the some holy man gave sight to the blind daughter of a tribune, and then coming to St. Alban, there received of his relics, and left other relics of the blessed Apostles and other martyrs. [429 a.d.]

After this, a certain man, who held the office of tribune, came forward with his wife, and brought his blind daughter, a child of ten years of age, to be healed of the bishops. They ordered her to be brought to their adversaries, who, being rebuked by their own conscience, joined their entreaties to those of the child's parents, and besought the bishops that she might be healed. They, therefore, perceiving their adversaries to yield, poured forth a short prayer, and then Germanus, full of the Holy Ghost, invoking the Trinity, at once drew from his side a casket which hung about his neck, containing relics of the saints, and, taking it in his hands, applied it in the sight of all to the girl's eyes, which were immediately delivered from darkness and filled with the light of truth. The parents rejoiced, and the people were filled with awe at

the miracle; and after that day, the heretical beliefs were so fully obliterated from the minds of all, that they thirsted for and sought after the doctrine of the bishops.

This damnable heresy being thus suppressed, and the authors thereof confuted, and all the people settled in the purity of the faith, the bishops went to the tomb of the martyr, the blessed Alban, to give thanks to God through him. There Germanus, having with him relics of all the Apostles, and of divers martyrs, after offering up his prayers, commanded the tomb to be opened, that he might lay therein the precious gifts; judging it fitting, that the limbs of saints brought together from divers countries, as their equal merits had procured them admission into heaven, should find shelter in one tomb. These being honourably bestowed, and laid together, he took up a handful of dust from the place where the blessed martyr's blood had been shed, to carry away with him. In this dust the blood had been preserved, showing that the slaughter of the martyrs was red, though the persecutor was pale in death. In consequence of these things, an innumerable multitude of people was that day converted to the Lord.

CHAP. 19

Unde dum redeunt, insidiator inimicus, casualibus laqueis praeparatis, Germani pedem lapsus occasione contriuit, ignorans merita illius, sicut Iob beatissimi, afflictione corporis propaganda; et dum aliquandiu uno in loco infirmitatis necessitate teneretur, in uicina, qua manebat, casula exarsit incendium; quod consumtis domibus, quae illic palustri harundine tegebantur, ad eum habitaculum, in quo idem iacebat, flabris stimulantibus ferebatur.

Concursus omnium ad antistitem conuolauit, ut elatus manibus periculum, quod imminebat, euaderet; quibus increpatis moueri se fidei praesumptione non passus est. At multitudo omnis desperatione perterrita obuiam currit incendio. Sed ut Dei potentia manifestior appareret, quicquid custodire temtauerat turba, consumitur; quod uero iacens et infirmus defenderat, reserato hospitio sancti uiri, expauescens flamma transiliuit, ultra citraque desaeuiens; et inter globos flammantis incendii incolume tabernaculum, quod habitator inclusus seruabat, emicuit. Exultat turba miraculo, et uictam se diuinis uirtutibus gratulatur. Excubabat diebus ac noctibus ante tugurium pauperis uulgus sine numero; hi animas curare, hi cupientes corpora.

Referri nequeunt, quae Christus operabatur in famulo, qui uirtutes faciebat infirmus; et cum debilitati suae nihil remedii pateretur adhiberi, quadam nocte candentem niueis uestibus uidit sibi adesse personam, quae manu extensa iacentem uideretur ad tollere, eumque consistere firmis uestigiis imperabat. Post quam horam ita, fugatis doloribus, recepit pristinam sanitatem, ut, die reddito, itineris laborem subiret intrepidus.

Chap. XIX.

How the same holy man, being detained there by sickness, by his prayers quenched a fire that had broken out among the houses, and was himself cured of his infirmity by a vision. [429 a.d.]

As they were returning thence, the treacherous enemy, having, as it chanced, prepared a snare, caused Germanus to bruise his foot by a fall, not knowing that, as it was with the blessed Job, his merits would be but increased by bodily affliction. Whilst he was thus detained some time in the same place by his infirmity, a fire broke out in a cottage neighbouring to that in which he was; and having burned down the other houses which were thatched with reed, fanned by the wind, was carried on to the dwelling in which he lay. The people all flocked to the prelate, entreating that they might lift him in their arms, and save him from the impending danger. But he rebuked them, and in the assurance of his faith, would not suffer himself to be removed. The whole multitude, in terror and despair, ran to oppose the conflagration; but, for the greater manifestation of the Divine power, whatsoever the crowd endeavoured

to save, was destroyed; and what the sick and helpless man defended, the flame avoided and passed by, though the house that sheltered the holy man lay open to it, and while the fire raged on every side, the place in which he lay appeared untouched, amid the general conflagration. The multitude rejoiced at the miracle, and was gladly vanquished by the power of God. A great crowd of people watched day and night before the humble cottage; some to have their souls healed, and some their bodies. All that Christ wrought in the person of his servant, all the wonders the sick man performed cannot be told. Moreover, he would suffer no medicines to be applied to his infirmity; but one night he saw one clad in garments as white as snow, standing by him, who reaching out his hand, seemed to raise him up, and ordered him to stand firm upon his feet; from which time his pain ceased, and he was so perfectly restored, that when the day came, with good courage he set forth upon his journey.

CHAP. 20

Interea Saxones Pictique bellum aduersum Brettones iunctis uiribus susceperunt, quos eadem necessitas in castra contraxerat; et cum trepidi partes suas pene in pares iudicarent, sanctorum antistitum auxilium petierunt; qui promissum maturantes aduentum, tantum pauentibus fiducia contulerunt, ut accessisse maximus crederetur exercitus. Itaque apostolicis ducibus Christus militabat in castris. Aderant etiam quadragesimae uenerabiles dies, quos religiosiores reddebat praesentia sacerdotum, in tantum, ut cotidianis praedicationibus instituti, certatim populi ad gratiam baptismatis conuolarent. Nam maxima exercitus multitudo undam lauacri salutaris expetiit, et ecclesia ad diem resurrectionis dominicae frondibus contexta componitur, atque in expeditione campestri instar ciuitatis aptatur. Madidus baptisinate procedit exercitus, fides feruet in populo, et conterriti armorum praesidio, diuinitatis expectatur auxilium. Institutio uel forma castitatis hostibus nuntiatur, qui uictoriam quasi de inermi exercitu praesumentes, adsumta alacritate festinant; quorum tamen aduentus exploratione cognoscitur.

Cumque, emensa sollemnitate paschali, recens de lauacro pars maior exercitus arma capere et bellum parare temtaret, Germanus ducem se proelii profitetur, eligit expeditos, circumiecta percurrit, et e regione, qua hostium sperabatur aduentus, uallem circumdatam mediis montibus intuetur. Quo in loco nouum componit exercitum ipse dux agminis. Et iam aderat ferox hostium multitudo, quam adpropinquare intuebantur in insidiis constituti. Tum subito Germanus signifer uniuersos admonet, et praedicat, ut uoci suae uno clamore respondeant; securisque hostibus, qui se insperatos adesse confiderent, alleluiam tertio repetitam sacerdotes exclamabant.

Sequitur una uox omnium, et elatum clamorem repercusso aere montium conclusa multiplicant; hostile agmen terrore prosternitur, et super se non solum rupes circumdatas, sed etiam ipsam caeli machinam contremescunt, trepidationique iniectae uix sufficere pedum pernicitas credebatur. Passim fugiunt, arma prociunt, gaudentes uel nuda corpora eripuisse discrimini; plures etiam timore praecipites flumen, quod transierant, deuorauit. Ultionem suam innocens exercitus intuetur, et uictoriae concessae otiosus spectator efficitur. Spolia colliguntur exposita, et caelestis palmae gaudia miles religiosus amplectitur. Triumphant pontifices hostibus fuis sine sanguine; triumphant uictoria fide obtenta, non uiribus.

Conposita itaque insula securitate multiplici, superatisque hostibus uel inuisibilibus, uel carne conspicuis, reditum moliuntur pontifices. Quibus tranquillam nauigationem et merita propria et intercessio beati martyris Albani parauerunt, quietosque eos suorum desideriis felix carina restituit.

How the same Bishops brought help from Heaven to the Britons in a battle, and then returned home. [430 a.d.]

In the meantime, the Saxons and Picts, with their united forces, made war upon the Britons, who in these straits were compelled to take up arms. In their terror thinking themselves unequal to their enemies, they implored the assistance of the holy bishops; who, hastening to them as they had promised, inspired so much confidence into these fearful people, that one would have thought they had been joined by a mighty army. Thus, by these apostolic leaders, Christ Himself commanded in their camp. The holy days of Lent were also at hand, and were rendered more sacred by the presence of the bishops, insomuch that the people being instructed by daily sermons, came together eagerly to receive the grace of baptism. For a great multitude of the army desired admission to the saving waters, and a wattled church was constructed for the Feast of the Resurrection of our Lord, and so fitted up for the army in the field as if it were in a city. Still wet with the baptismal water the troops set forth; the faith of the people was fired; and where arms had been deemed of no avail, they looked to the help of God. News reached the enemy of the manner and method of their purification, who, assured of success, as if they had to deal with an unarmed host, hastened forward with renewed eagerness. But their approach was made known by scouts. When, after the celebration of Easter, the greater part of the army, fresh from the font, began to take up arms and prepare for war, Germanus offered to be their leader. He picked out the most active, explored the country round about, and observed, in the way by which the enemy was expected, a valley encompassed by hills of moderate height. In that place he drew up his untried troops, himself acting as their general. And now a formidable host of foes drew near, visible, as they approached, to his men lying in ambush. Then, on a sudden, Germanus, bearing the standard, exhorted his men, and bade them all in a loud voice repeat his words. As the enemy advanced in all security, thinking to take them by surprise, the bishops three times cried, "Hallelujah." A universal shout of the same word followed, and the echoes from the surrounding hills gave back the cry on all sides, the enemy was panic-stricken, fearing, not only the neighbouring rocks, but even the very frame of heaven above them; and such was their terror, that their feet were not swift enough to save them. They fled in disorder, casting away their arms, and well satisfied if, even with unprotected bodies, they could escape the danger; many of them, flying headlong in their fear, were engulfed by the river which they had crossed. The Britons, without a blow, inactive spectators of the victory they had gained, beheld their vengeance complete. The scattered spoils were gathered up, and the devout soldiers rejoiced in the success which Heaven had granted them. The prelates thus triumphed over the enemy without bloodshed, and gained a victory by faith, without the aid of human force. Thus, having settled the affairs of the island, and restored tranquillity by the defeat of the invisible

foes, as well as of enemies in the flesh, they prepared to return home. Their own merits, and the intercession of the blessed martyr Alban, obtained for them a calm passage, and the happy vessel restored them in peace to the desires of their people.

CHAP. 21

Nec multo interposito tempore nuntiatur ex eadem insula Pelagianam peruersitatem iterato paucis auctoribus dilatari;

rursusque ad beatissimum uirum preces sacerdotum omnium deferuntur, ut causam Dei, quam prius obtinuerat, tutaretur. Quorum petitioni festinus obtemperat. Namque adiuncto sibi Seuero, totius sanctitatis uiro, qui erat discipulus beatissimi patris Lupi Trecasenorum episcopi, et tunc Treuiris ordinatus episcopus, gentibus primae Germaniae uerbum praedicabat, mare conscendit, et consentientibus elementis, tranquillo nauigio Britannias petit. Interea sinistri spiritus peruolantes totam insulam Germanum uenire inuitis uaticinationibus nuntiabant; in tantum, ut Elafius quidam, regionis illius primus, in occurso sanctorum sine ulla manifesti nuntii relatione properaret, exhibens secum filium, quem in ipso flore adulescentiae debilitas dolenda damnauerat. Erat enim arescentibus neruis contracto poplite, cui per siccitatem cruris usus uestigii negabatur. Hunc Elafium prouincia tota subsequitur; ueniunt sacerdotes, occurrit inscia multitudo, confestim benedictio et sermonis diuini doctrina profunditur. Recognoscunt populum in ea, qua reliquerat, credulitate durante; intellegunt culpam esse paucorum, inquirunt auctores, inuentosque condemnant. Cum subito Elafius pedibus aduoluitur sacerdotum, offerens filium, cuius necessitatem ipsa debilitas etiam sine precibus adlegabat; fit communis omnium dolor, praecipue sacerdotum, qui conceptam misericordiam ad diuinam clementiam contulerunt; statimque adulescentem beatus Germanus sedere compulit, adtrectat poplitem debilitate curuatum, et per tota infirmitatis spatia medicabilis dextera percurrit, salubremque tactum sanitas festina subsequitur.

Ariditas sucum, nerui officia receperunt, et in conspectu omnium filio incolumitas, patri filius restituitur. Implentur populi stupore miraculi, et in pectoribus omnium fides catholica inculcata firmatur. Praedicatio deinde ad plebem de praeuaricationis emendatione conuertitur, omniumque sententia prauitatis auctores, qui erant expulsi insula, sacerdotibus adducuntur ad mediterranea deferendi, ut et regio absolutione, et illi emendatione fruerentur.

Factumque est, ut in illis locis multo ex eo tempore fides intemerata perduraret.

Itaque, conpositis omnibus, beati sacerdotes ea, qua uenerant, prosperitate redierunt. Porro Germanus post haec ad Rauennam pro pace Armoricanae gentis supplicaturus aduenit, ibique a Ualentiniano et Placidia matre ipsius summa reuerentia susceptus, migravit ad Christum. Cuius corpus honorifico agmine, comitantibus uirtutum operibus, suam defertur ad urbem. Nec multo post Ualentinianus ab Aetii patricii, quem occiderat, satellitibus interimitur, anno imperii Marciani VIo, cum quo simul Hesperium concidit regnum.

How, when the Pelagian heresy began to spring up afresh, Germanus, returning to Britain with Severus, first restored bodily strength to a lame youth, then spiritual health to the people of God, having condemned or converted the Heretics. [447 a.d.]

Not long after, news was brought from the same island, that certain persons were again attempting to teach and spread abroad the Pelagian heresy, and again the holy Germanus was entreated by all the priests, that he would defend the cause of God, which he had before maintained. He speedily complied with their request; and taking with him Severus, a man of singular sanctity, who was disciple to the blessed father, Lupus, bishop of Troyes, and at that time, having been ordained bishop of the Treveri, was preaching the Word of God to the tribes of Upper Germany, put to sea, and with favouring winds and calm waters sailed to Britain.

In the meantime, the evil spirits, speeding through the whole island, were constrained against their will to foretell that Germanus was coming, insomuch, that one Elafius, a chief of that region, without tidings from any visible messenger, hastened to meet the holy men, carrying with him his son, who in the very flower of his youth laboured under a grievous infirmity; for the sinews of the knee were wasted and shrunk, so that the withered limb was denied the power to walk. All the country followed this Elafius. The bishops arrived, and were met by the ignorant multitude, whom they blessed, and preached the Word of God to them. They found the people constant in the faith as they had left them; and learning that but few had gone astray, they sought out the authors of the evil and condemned them. Then suddenly Elafius cast himself at the feet of the bishops, presenting his son, whose distress was visible and needed no words to express it. All were grieved, but especially the bishops, who, filled with pity, invoked the mercy of God; and straightway the blessed Germanus, causing the youth to sit down, touched the bent and feeble knee and passed his healing hand over all the diseased part. At once health was restored by the power of his touch, the withered limb regained its vigour, the sinews resumed their task, and the youth was, in the presence of all the people, delivered whole to his father. The multitude was amazed at the miracle, and the Catholic faith was firmly established in the hearts of all; after which, they were, in a sermon, exhorted to amend their error. By the judgement of all, the exponents of the heresy, who had been banished from the island, were brought before the bishops, to be conveyed into the continent, that the country might be rid of them, and they corrected of their errors. So it came to pass that the faith in those parts continued long after pure and untainted. Thus when they had settled all things, the blessed prelates returned home as prosperously as they had come.

But Germanus, after this, went to Ravenna to intercede for the tranquillity

of the Armoricans, where, after being very honourably received by Valentinian and his mother, Placidia, he departed hence to Christ; his body was conveyed to his own city with a splendid retinue, and mighty works attended his passage to the grave. Not long after, Valentinian was murdered by the followers of Aetius, the patrician, whom he had put to death, in the sixth year of the reign of Marcian, and with him ended the empire of the West.

CHAP. 22

Interea Britanniae cessatum quidem est parumper ab externis, sed non a ciuilibus bellis. Manebant exterminia ciuitatum ab hoste derutarum ac desertarum; pugnabant contra inuicem, qui hostem euaserant, ciues. Attamen recente adhuc memoria calamitatis et cladis inflictæ seruabant utcumque reges, sacerdotes, priuati, et optimates suum quique ordinem. At illis decedentibus, cum successisset actas tempestatis illius nescia, et præsentis solum serenitatis statum experta, ita cuncta ueritatis ac iustitiæ moderamina concussa ac subuersa sunt, ut earum non dicam uestigium, sed ne memoria quidem, præter in paucis et ualde paucis ulla appareret. Qui inter alia inenarrabilem scelerum facta, quæ historicus eorum Gildus flebili sermone describit, et hoc addebant, ut numquam genti Saxonum siue Anglorum, secum Britanniam incolenti, uerbum fidei prædicando committerent. Sed non tamen diuina pietas plebem suam, quam præsciuit, deseruit, quin multo digniores genti memoratæ praecones ueritatis, per quos crederet, destinauit.

Chap. XXII.

How the Britons, being for a time at rest from foreign invasions, wore themselves out by civil wars, and at the same time gave themselves up to more heinous crimes.

In the meantime, in Britain, there was some respite from foreign, but not from civil war. The cities destroyed by the enemy and abandoned remained in ruins; and the natives, who had escaped the enemy, now fought against each other. Nevertheless, the kings, priests, private men, and the nobility, still remembering the late calamities and slaughters, in some measure kept within bounds; but when these died, and another generation succeeded, which knew nothing of those times, and was only acquainted with the existing peaceable state of things, all the bonds of truth and justice were so entirely broken, that there was not only no trace of them remaining, but only very few persons seemed to retain any memory of them at all. To other crimes beyond description, which their own historian, Gildas, mournfully relates, they added this — that they never preached the faith to the Saxons, or English, who dwelt amongst them. Nevertheless, the goodness of God did not forsake his people, whom he foreknew, but sent to the aforesaid nation much more worthy heralds of the truth, to bring it to the faith.

CHAP. 23

Siquidem anno ab incarnatione Domini DLXXXII Mauricius ab Augusto LIII imperium suscipiens XX et I annis tenuit. Cuius anno regni X Gregorius, uir doctrina et actione praecipuus, pontificatum Romanae et apostolicae sedis sortitus rexit annos XIII, menses VI, et dies X. Qui diuino admonitus instinctu anno XIII eiusdem principis, aduentus uero Anglorum in Britanniam anno circiter CL, misit seruum Dei Augustinum et alios plures cum eo monachos timentes Dominum praedicare uerbum Dei genti Anglorum. Qui cum iussis pontificalibus obtemperantes memoratum opus adgredi coepissent, iamque aliquantulum itineris confecissent, perculsi timore inertii, redire domum potius, quam barbaram, feram, incredulamque gentem, cuius ne linguam quidem nossent, adire cogitabant, et hoc esse tutius communi consilio decernebant. Nec mora, Augustinum, quem eis episcopum ordinandum, si ab Anglis susciperentur, disposuerat, domum remittunt, qui a beato Gregorio humili supplicatu obtineret, ne tam periculosam, tam laboriosam, tam incertam peregrinationem adire deberent. Quibus ille exhortatorias mittens litteras, in opus eos uerbi, diuino confisos auxilio, proficisci suadet. Quarum uidelicet litterarum ista est forma:

Gregorius seruus seruorum Dei seruis Domini nostri.

Quia melius fuerat bona non incipere, quam ab his, quae coepta sunt, cogitatione retrorsum redire, summo studio, dilectissimi filii, oportet, ut opus bonum, quod auxiliante Domino coepistis, impleatis.

Nec labor uos ergo itineris, nec maledicorum hominum linguae deterreant; sed omni instantia, omnique feruore, quae inchoastis, Deo auctore peragite; scientes, quod laborem magnum maior aeternae retributionis gloria sequitur. Remeanti autem Augustino praeposito uestro, quem et abbatem uobis constituimus, in omnibus humiliter oboedite; scientes hoc uestris animabus per omnia profuturum, quicquid a uobis fuerit in eius admonitione completum. Omnipotens Deus sua uos gratia protegat, et uestri laboris fructum in aeterna me patria uidere concedat; quatinus etsi uobiscum laborare nequeo, simul in gaudio retributionis inuemar, quia laborare scilicet uolo.

Deus uos incolumes custodiat, dilectissimi filii.

Data die X Kalendarum Augustarum, imperante domino nostro Mauricio Tiberio piissimo Augusto anno XIII, post consulatum eiusdem domini nostri anno XIII, indictione XIII.

Chap. XXIII.

How the holy Pope Gregory sent Augustine, with other monks, to preach to the English nation, and encouraged them by a letter of exhortation, not to desist from their labour. [596 a.d.]

In the year of our Lord 582, Maurice, the fifty-fourth from Augustus, ascended the throne, and reigned twenty-one years. In the tenth year of his reign, Gregory, a man eminent in learning and the conduct of affairs, was promoted to the Apostolic see of Rome, and presided over it thirteen years, six months and ten days. He, being moved by Divine inspiration, in the fourteenth year of the same emperor, and about the one hundred and fiftieth after the coming of the English into Britain, sent the servant of God, Augustine, and with him divers other monks, who feared the Lord, to preach the Word of God to the English nation. They having, in obedience to the pope's commands, undertaken that work, when they had gone but a little way on their journey, were seized with craven terror, and began to think of returning home, rather than proceed to a barbarous, fierce, and unbelieving nation, to whose very language they were strangers; and by common consent they decided that this was the safer course. At once Augustine, who had been appointed to be consecrated bishop, if they should be received by the English, was sent back, that he might, by humble entreaty, obtain of the blessed Gregory, that they should not be compelled to undertake so dangerous, toilsome, and uncertain a journey. The pope, in reply, sent them a letter of exhortation, persuading them to set forth to the work of the Divine Word, and rely on the help of God. The purport of which letter was as follows:

“Gregory, the servant of the servants of God, to the servants of our Lord. Forasmuch as it had been better not to begin a good work, than to think of desisting from one which has been begun, it behoves you, my beloved sons, to fulfil with all diligence the good work, which, by the help of the Lord, you have undertaken. Let not, therefore, the toil of the journey, nor the tongues of evil-speaking men, discourage you; but with all earnestness and zeal perform, by God's guidance, that which you have set about; being assured, that great labour is followed by the greater glory of an eternal reward. When Augustine, your Superior, returns, whom we also constitute your abbot, humbly obey him in all things; knowing, that whatsoever you shall do by his direction, will, in all respects, be profitable to your souls. Almighty God protect you with His grace, and grant that I may, in the heavenly country, see the fruits of your labour, inasmuch as, though I cannot labour with you, I shall partake in the joy of the reward, because I am willing to labour. God keep you in safety, my most beloved sons. Given the 23rd of July, in the fourteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the thirteenth year after the consulship of our lord aforesaid, and the fourteenth indiction.”

CHAP. 24

Misit etiam tunc isdem uenerandus pontifex ad Etherium Arelatensem archiepiscopum, ut Augustinum Brittaniam pergentem benigne susciperet, litteras, quarum iste est textus:

Reuerentissimo et sanctissimo fratri Etherio coepiscopo Gregorius seruus seruorum Dei.

Licet apud sacerdotes habentes Deo placitam caritatem religiosi uiri nullius commendatione indigeant; quia tamen aptum scribendi se tempus ingessit, fraternitati uestrae nostra mittere scripta curauimus; insinuantes latorem praesentium Augustinum seruum Dei, de cuius certi sumus studio, cum aliis seruis Dei, illic nos pro utilitate animarum auxiliante Domino direxisse; quem necesse est, ut sacerdotali studio sanctitas uestra adiuuare, et sua ei solacia praebere festinet. Cui etiam, ut promptiores ad suffragandum possitis existere, causam uobis iniunximus subtiliter indicare; scientes quod, ea cognita, tota uos propter Deum deuotione ad solaciandum, quia res exigit, commodetis. Candidum praeterea presbyterum, communem filium, quem ad gubernationem patrimonioli ecclesiae nostrae transmisimus, caritati uestrae in omnibus commendamus. Deus te incolumem custodiat, reuerentissime frater.

Data die X Kalendarum Augustarum, imperante domino nostro Mauricio Tiberio piissimo Augusto, anno XIII, post consulatum eiusdem domini nostri anno XIII, indictione XIII.

Chap. XXIV.

How he wrote to the bishop of Arles to entertain them. [596 a.d.]

The same venerable pope also sent at the same time a letter to Aetherius, archbishop of Arles, exhorting him to give favourable entertainment to Augustine on his way to Britain; which letter was in these words:

“To his most reverend and holy brother and fellow bishop Aetherius, Gregory, the servant of the servants of God. Although religious men stand in need of no recommendation with priests who have the charity which is pleasing to God; yet because an opportunity of writing has occurred, we have thought fit to send this letter to you, Brother, to inform you, that with the help of God we have directed thither, for the good of souls, the bearer of these presents, Augustine, the servant of God, of whose zeal we are assured, with other servants of God, whom it is requisite that your Holiness readily assist with priestly zeal, affording him all the comfort in your power. And to the end that you may be the more ready in your help, we have enjoined him to inform you particularly of the occasion of his coming; knowing, that when you are acquainted with it, you will, as the matter requires, for the sake of God,

dutifully dispose yourself to give him comfort. We also in all things recommend to your charity, Candidus, the priest, our common son, whom we have transferred to the administration of a small patrimony in our Church. God keep you in safety, most reverend brother. Given the 23rd day of July, in the fourteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the thirteenth year after the consulship of our lord aforesaid, and the fourteenth indiction.”

CHAP. 25

Roboratus ergo confirmatione beati patris Gregorii, Augustinus cum famulis Christi, qui erant cum eo, rediit in opus uerbi, peruenitque Brittaniam. Erat eo tempore rex Aedilberct in Cantia potentissimus, qui ad confinium usque Humbrae fluminis maximi, quo meridiani et septentrionales Anglorum populi dirimuntur, fines imperii tetenderat. Est autem ad orientalem Cantiae plagam Tanatos insula non modica, id est magnitudinis iuxta consuetudinem aestimationis Anglorum, familiarum DCrum, quam a continenti terra secernit fluuius Uantsumu, qui est latitudinis circiter trium stadiorum, et duobus tantum in locis est transmeabilis; utrumque enim caput protendit in mare. In hac ergo adplicuit seruus Domini Augustinus, et socii eius, uiri, ut ferunt, ferme XL. Acceperunt autem, praecipiente beato papa Gregorio, de gente Francorum interpretes; et mittens ad Aedilberctum mandauit se uenisse de Roma, ac nuntium ferre optimum, qui sibi obtemperantibus aeterna in caelis gaudia, et regnum sine fine cum Deo uiuo et uero futurum sine ulla dubietate promitteret. Qui, haec audiens, manere illos in ea, quam adierant, insula, et eis necessaria ministrari, donec uideret, quid eis faceret, iussit. Nam et antea fama ad eum Christianae religionis peruenerat, utpote qui et uxorem habebat Christianam de gente Francorum regia, uocabulo Bercta; quam ea condicione a parentibus acceperat, ut ritum fidei ac religionis suae cum episcopo, quem ei adiutorem fidei dederant, nomine Liudhardo, inuiolatum seruare licentiam haberet.

Post dies ergo uenit ad insulam rex, et residens sub diuo, iussit Augustinum cum sociis ad suum ibidem aduenire colloquium. Cauerat enim, ne in aliquam domum ad se introirent, uetere usus augurio, ne superuentu suo, siquid malificae artis habuissent, eum superando deciperent. At illi non daemonica, sed diuina uirtute praediti, ueniebant crucem pro uexillo ferentes argenteam, et imaginem Domini Saluatoris in tabula depictam, laetantiasque canentes pro sua simul et eorum, propter quos et ad quos uenerant, salute aeterna, Domino supplicabant. Cumque ad iussionem regis residentes uerbum ei uitae una cum omnibus, qui aderant, eius comitibus praedicarent, respondit ille dicens: ‘Pulchra sunt quidem uerba et promissa, quae adfertis;

sed quia noua sunt et incerta, non his possum adsensum tribuere, relictis eis, quae tanto tempore cum omni Anglorum gente seruauī. Uerum quia de longe huc peregrini uenistis, et, ut ego mihi uideor perspexisse, ea, quae uos uera et optima credebatis, nobis quoque communicare desiderastis, nolumus molesti esse uobis; quin potius benigno uos hospitio recipere, et, quae uictui sunt uestro necessaria, ministrare curamus; nec prohibemus, quin omnes, quos potestis, fidei uestrae religionis praedicando societis.’ Dedit ergo eis mansionem in ciuitate Doruuernensi, quae imperii sui totius erat metropolis, eisque, ut promiserat, cum administratione uictus temporalis licentiam quoque praedicandi non abstulit. Fertur autem, quia adpropinquantes ciuitati, more

suo cum cruce sancta et imagine magni regis Domini nostri Iesu Christi hanc laetaniam consona uoce modularentur: ‘Deprecamur te, Domine, in omni misericordia tua, ut auferatur furor tuus et ira tua a ciuitate ista, et de domo sancta tua, quoniam peccauimus. Alleluia.’

Chap. XXV.

How Augustine, coming into Britain, first preached in the Isle of Thanet to the King of Kent, and having obtained licence from him, went into Kent, in order to preach therein. [597 a.d.]

Augustine, thus strengthened by the encouragement of the blessed Father Gregory, returned to the work of the Word of God, with the servants of Christ who were with him, and arrived in Britain. The powerful Ethelbert was at that time king of Kent; he had extended his dominions as far as the boundary formed by the great river Humber, by which the Southern Saxons are divided from the Northern. On the east of Kent is the large Isle of Thanet, containing, according to the English way of reckoning, 600 families, divided from the mainland by the river Wantsum, which is about three furlongs in breadth, and which can be crossed only in two places; for at both ends it runs into the sea. On this island landed the servant of the Lord, Augustine, and his companions, being, as is reported, nearly forty men. They had obtained, by order of the blessed Pope Gregory, interpreters of the nation of the Franks, and sending to Ethelbert, signified that they were come from Rome, and brought a joyful message, which most undoubtedly assured to those that hearkened to it everlasting joys in heaven, and a kingdom that would never end, with the living and true God. The king hearing this, gave orders that they should stay in the island where they had landed, and be furnished with necessaries, till he should consider what to do with them. For he had before heard of the Christian religion, having a Christian wife of the royal family of the Franks, called Bertha; whom he had received from her parents, upon condition that she should be permitted to preserve inviolate the rites of her religion with the Bishop Liudhard, who was sent with her to support her in the faith. Some days after, the king came into the island, and sitting in the open air, ordered Augustine and his companions to come and hold a conference with him. For he had taken precaution that they should not come to him in any house, lest, by so coming, according to an ancient superstition, if they practised any magical arts, they might impose upon him, and so get the better of him. But they came endued with Divine, not with magic power, bearing a silver cross for their banner, and the image of our Lord and Saviour painted on a board; and chanting litanies, they offered up their prayers to the Lord for the eternal salvation both of themselves and of those to whom and for whom they had come. When they had sat down, in obedience to the king’s commands, and preached to him and his attendants there present the Word of life, the king answered thus: “Your words and promises are fair, but because they are new

to us, and of uncertain import, I cannot consent to them so far as to forsake that which I have so long observed with the whole English nation. But because you are come from far as strangers into my kingdom, and, as I conceive, are desirous to impart to us those things which you believe to be true, and most beneficial, we desire not to harm you, but will give you favourable entertainment, and take care to supply you with all things necessary to your sustenance; nor do we forbid you to preach and gain as many as you can to your religion.” Accordingly he gave them an abode in the city of Canterbury, which was the metropolis of all his dominions, and, as he had promised, besides supplying them with sustenance, did not refuse them liberty to preach. It is told that, as they drew near to the city, after their manner, with the holy cross, and the image of our sovereign Lord and King, Jesus Christ, they sang in concert this litany: “We beseech thee, O Lord, for Thy great mercy, that Thy wrath and anger be turned away from this city, and from Thy holy house, for we have sinned. Hallelujah.”

CHAP. 26

At ubi datam sibi mansionem intrauerant, coeperunt apostolicam primitiuae ecclesiae uitam imitari; orationibus uidelicet assiduis, uigiliis ac ieiuniis seruendo, uerbum uitae, quibus poterant, praedicando, cuncta huius mundi uelut aliena spernendo, ea tantum, quae uictui necessaria uidebantur, ab eis, quos docebant, accipiendo, secundum ea, quae docebant, ipsi per omnia uiuendo, et paratum ad patiendum aduersa quaeque, uel etiam moriendum pro ea, quam praedicabant, ueritate animum habendo. Quid mora? Crediderunt nonnulli et baptizabantur, mirantes simplicitatem innocentis uitae, ac dulcedinem doctrinae eorum caelestis. Erat autem prope ipsam ciuitatem ad orientem ecclesia in honorem sancti Martini antiquitus facta, dum adhuc Romani Brittaniam incolerent, in qua regina, quam Christianam fuisse praediximus, orare consuebat. In hac ergo et ipsi primo conuenire, psallere, orare, missas facere, praedicare, et baptizare coeperunt; donec, rege ad fidem conuerso, maiorem praedicandi per omnia, et ecclesias fabricandi uel restaurandi licentiam acciperent.

At ubi ipse etiam inter alios delectatus uita mundissima sima sanctorum, et promissis eorum suauissimis, quae uera esse miraculorum quoque multorum ostensione firmauerant, credens baptizatus est, coepere plures cotidie ad audiendum uerbum confluere, ac, relicto gentilitatis ritu, unitati se sanctae Christi ecclesiae credendo sociare. Quorum fidei et conuersioni ita congratulatus esse rex perhibetur, ut nullum tamen cogeret ad Christianismum; sed tantummodo credentes artiori dilectione, quasi conciuēs sibi regni caelestis, amplecteretur. Didicerat enim a doctoribus auctoribusque suae salutis seruitium Christi uoluntarium, non coacticiū esse debere. Nec distulit, quin etiam ipsis doctoribus suis locum sedis eorum gradui congruum in Doruerni metropoli sua donaret, simul et necessarias in diuersis speciebus possessiones conferret.

Chap. XXVI.

How St. Augustine in Kent followed the doctrine and manner of life of the primitive Church, and settled his episcopal see in the royal city. [597 a.d.]

As soon as they entered the dwelling-place assigned to them, they began to imitate the Apostolic manner of life in the primitive Church; applying themselves to constant prayer, watchings, and fastings; preaching the Word of life to as many as they could; despising all worldly things, as in nowise concerning them; receiving only their necessary food from those they taught; living themselves in all respects conformably to what they taught, and being always ready to suffer any adversity, and even to die for that truth which they preached. In brief, some believed and were baptized, admiring the simplicity

of their blameless life, and the sweetness of their heavenly doctrine. There was on the east side of the city, a church dedicated of old to the honour of St. Martin, built whilst the Romans were still in the island, wherein the queen, who, as has been said before, was a Christian, was wont to pray. In this they also first began to come together, to chant the Psalms, to pray, to celebrate Mass, to preach, and to baptize, till when the king had been converted to the faith, they obtained greater liberty to preach everywhere and build or repair churches.

When he, among the rest, believed and was baptized, attracted by the pure life of these holy men and their gracious promises, the truth of which they established by many miracles, greater numbers began daily to flock together to hear the Word, and, forsaking their heathen rites, to have fellowship, through faith, in the unity of Christ's Holy Church. It is told that the king, while he rejoiced at their conversion and their faith, yet compelled none to embrace Christianity, but only showed more affection to the believers, as to his fellow citizens in the kingdom of Heaven. For he had learned from those who had instructed him and guided him to salvation, that the service of Christ ought to be voluntary, not by compulsion. Nor was it long before he gave his teachers a settled residence suited to their degree in his metropolis of Canterbury, with such possessions of divers sorts as were necessary for them.

CHAP. 27

Interea uir Domini Augustinus uenit Arelas, et ab archiepiscopo eiusdem ciuitatis Aetherio, iuxta quod iussa sancti patris Gregorii acceperant, archiepiscopus genti Anglorum ordinatus est; reuersusque Brittaniam misit continuo Roman Laurentium presbyterum et Petrum monachum, qui beato pontifici Gregorio gentem Anglorum fidem Christi suscepisse, ac se episcopum factum esse referrent; simul et de eis, quae necessariae uidebantur, quaestionibus eius consulta flagitans. Nec mora, congrua quaesitui responsa recepit; quae etiam huic historiae nostrae commodum duximus indere.

I. Interrogatio beati Augustini episcopi Cantuariorum ecclesiae: De episcopis, qualiter cum suis clericis conuersentur, uel de his, quae fidelium oblationibus accedunt altario; quanta debeant fieri portiones et qualiter episcopus agere in ecclesia debeat?

Respondit Gregorius papa urbis Romae: Sacra scriptura testatur, quam te bene nosse dubium non est, et specialiter beati Pauli ad Timotheum epistolae, in quibus eum erudire studuit, qualiter in domo Dei conuersari debuisset. Mos autem sedis apostolicae est ordinatis episcopis praecepta tradere, ut omni stipendio, quod accedit, quattuor debeant fieri portiones; una uidelicet episcopo et familiae propter hospitalitatem atque susceptionem, alia clero, tertia pauperibus, quarta ecclesiis reparandis. Sed quia tua fraternitas monasterii regulis erudita, seorsum fieri non debet a clericis suis in ecclesia Anglorum, quae auctore Deo nuper adhuc ad fidem perducta est, hanc debet conuersationem instituere, quae initio nascentis ecclesiae fuit patribus nostris; in quibus nullus eorum ex his, quae possidebant, aliquid suum esse dicebat, sed erant eis omnia communia.

Siqui uero sunt clerici extra sacros ordines constituti, qui se continere non possunt, sortiri uxores debent, et stipendia sua exterius accipere; quia et de hisdem patribus, de quibus praefati sumus, nouimus scriptum, quod diuidebatur singulis, prout cuique opus erat. De eorum quoque stipendio cogitandum atque prouidendum est, et sub ecclesiastica regula sunt tenendi, ut bonis moribus uiuant, et canendis psalmis inuigilent, et ab omnibus inlicitis et cor et linguam et corpus Deo auctore conseruent. Communi autem uita uiuentibus iam de faciendis portionibus, uel exhibenda hospitalitate, et adimplenda misericordia nobis quid erit loquendum?

Cum omne, quod superest, in causis piis ac religiosis erogandum est, Domino magistro omnium docente: 'Quod superest, date elemosinam, et ecce omnia munda sunt uobis.'

II. Interrogatio Augustini: Cum una sit fides, sunt ecclesiarum diuersae consuetudines, et altera consuetudo missarum in sancta Romana ecclesia, atque altera in Galliarum tenetur?

Respondit Gregorius papa: Nouit fraternitas tua Romanae ecclesiae consuetudinem, in qua se meminit nutritam. Sed mihi placet ut, siue in Romana, siue in Galliarum, seu in qualibet ecclesia aliquid inuenisti, quod plus omnipotenti Deo possit placere, sollicite eligas, et in Anglorum ecclesia, quae adhuc ad fidem noua est, institutione praecipua, quae de multis ecclesiis colligere potuisti, infundas. Non enim pro locis res, sed pro bonis rebus loca amanda sunt. Ex singulis ergo quibusque ecclesiis, quae pia, quae religiosa, quae recta sunt, elige; et haec quasi in fasciculum collecta apud Anglorum mentes in consuetudinem depone.

III. Interrogatio Augustini: Obsecro, quid pati debeat, si quis aliquid de ecclesia furtu abstulerit?

Respondit Gregorius: Hoc tua fraternitas ex persona furis pensare potest, qualiter ualeat corrigi. Sunt enim quidam, qui habentes subsidia furtum perpetrant, et sunt alii, qui hac in re ex inopia delinquant; unde necesse est, ut quidam damnis, quidam uero uerberibus, et quidam districtius, quidam autem lenius corrigantur.

Et cum paulo districtius agitur, ex caritate agendum est, et non ex furore; quia ipsi hoc praestatur, qui corrigitur, ne gehennae ignibus tradatur. Sic enim nos fidelibus tenere disciplinam debemus, sicut boni patres carnalibus filiis solent, quos et pro culpis uerberibus feriunt, et tamen ipsos, quos doloribus adfligunt, habere heredes quaerunt; et quae possident, ipsis seruant, quos irati insequi uidentur. Haec ergo caritas in mente tenenda est, et ipsa modum correctionis dictat, ita ut mens extra rationis regulam omnino nihil faciat. Adde etiam, quomodo ea, quae furtu de ecclesiis abstulerint, reddere debeant. Sed absit, ut ecclesia cum augmento recipiat, quod de terrenis rebus uidetur amittere, et lucra de uanis quaerere.

IIII. Interrogatio Augustini: Si debeant duo germani fratres singulas sorores accipere, quae sunt ab illis longa progenie generatae?

Respondit Gregorius: Hoc fieri modis omnibus licet; nequaquam enim in sacris eloquiis inuenitur, quod huic capitulo contradicere uideatur.

V. Interrogatio Augustini: Usque ad quotam generationem fideles debeant cum propinquis sibi coniugio copulari? et nouercis et cognatis si liceat copulari coniugio?

Respondit Gregorius: Quaedam terrena lex in Romana república permittit, ut siue frater et soror, seu duorum fratrum germanorum, uel duarum sororum filius et filia misceantur. Sed experimento didicimus ex tali coniugio sobolem non posse succrescere. Et sacra lex prohibet cognationis turpitudinem reuelare. Unde necesse est, ut iam tertia uel quarta generatio fidelium licenter sibi iungi debeat;

nam secunda, quam praediximus, a se omni modo debet abstinere. Cum nouerca autem miscere graue est facinus, quia et in lege scriptum est:

‘Turpitudinem patris tui non reuelabis.’ Neque enim patris turpitudinem filius reuelare potest. Sed quia scriptum est: ‘Erunt duo in carne una,’ qui turpitudinem nouercae, quae una caro cum patre fuit, reuelare praesumserit, profecto patris turpitudinem reuelauit. Cum cognata quoque miscere prohibitum est, quia per coniunctionem priorem caro fratris fuerit facta. Pro qua re etiam Iohannes Baptista capite truncatus est, et sancto martyrio consummatus, cui non est dictum, ut Christum negaret, et pro Christi confessione occisus est; sed quia isdem Dominus noster Iesus Christus dixerat: ‘Ego sum ueritas’; quia pro ueritate Iohannes occisus est, uidelicet et pro Christo sanguinem fudit.

Quia uero sunt multi in Anglorum gente, qui, dum adhuc in infidelitate essent, huic nefando coniugio dicuntur admixti, ad fidem uenientes admonendi sunt, ut se abstineant, et graue hoc esse peccatum cognoscant. Tremendum Dei iudicium timeant, ne pro carnali dilectione tormenta aeterni cruciatus incurrant. Non tamen pro hac re sacri corporis ac sanguinis Domini communione priuandi sunt, ne in eis illa ulcisci uideantur, in quibus se per ignorantiam ante lauacrum baptismatis adstrinxerunt. In hoc enim tempore sancta ecclesia quaedam per feruorem corrigit, quaedam per mansuetudinem tolerat, quaedam per considerationem dissimulat, atque ita portat et dissimulat, ut saepe malum, quod aduersatur, portando et dissimulando conpescat. Omnes autem, qui ad fidem ueniunt, admonendi sunt, ne tale aliquid audeant perpetrare. Siqui autem perpetrauerint, corporis et sanguinis Domini communione priuandi sunt; quia, sicut in his, qui per ignorantiam fecerunt, culpa aliquatenus toleranda est, ita in his fortiter insequenda, qui non metuunt sciendo peccare.

VI. Interrogatio Augustini: Si longinquitas itineris magna interiacet, ut episcopi non facile ualeant conuenire, an debeat sine aliorum episcoporum praesentia episcopus ordinari?

Respondit Gregorius: Et quidem in Anglorum ecclesia, in qua adhuc solus tu episcopus inueniris, ordinare episcopum non aliter nisi sine episcopis potes. Nam quando de Galliis episcopi ueniunt, qui in ordinatione episcopi testes adsistant? Sed fraternitatem tuam ita uolumus episcopos ordinare, ut ipsi sibi episcopi longo interuallo minime disiungantur, quatinus nulla sit necessitas, ut in ordinatione episcopi pastores quoque alii, quorum praesentia ualde est utilis, facile debeant conuenire. Cum igitur auctore Deo ita fuerint episcopi in propinquis sibi locis ordinati, per omnia episcoporum ordinatio sine adgregatis tribus uel quattuor episcopis fieri non debet. Nam in ipsis rebus spiritalibus, ut sapienter et mature disponantur, exemplum trahere a rebus etiam carnalibus possumus. Certe enim dum coniugia in mundo celebrantur, coniugati quique conuocantur, ut qui in uia iam coniugii praecesserunt, in subsequentis quoque copulae gaudio misceantur. Cur non ergo et in hac spiritali ordinatione, qua per sacrum ministerium homo Deo coniungitur, tales conueniant, qui uel in prouectu ordinati episcopi gaudeant, uel pro eius

custodia omnipotenti Deo preces pariter fundant?

VII. Interrogatio Augustini: Qualiter debemus cum Galliarum atque Brittaniarum episcopis agere?

Respondit Gregorius: In Galliarum episcopis nullam tibi auctoritatem tribuimus; quia ab antiquis praedecessorum meorum temporibus pallium Arelatensis episcopus accepit, quem nos priuare auctoritate percepta minime debemus. Si igitur contingat, ut fraternitas tua ad Galliarum prouinciam transeat, cum eodem Arelatense episcopo debet agere, qualiter, siqua sunt in episcopis uitia, corrigantur. Qui si forte in disciplinac uigore tepidus existat, tuae fraternitatis zelo accendendus est. Cui etiam epistulas fecimus, ut cum tuae sanctitatis praesentia in Galliis, et ipse tota mente subueniat, et quae sunt Creatoris nostri iussioni contraria, ab episcoporum moribus conpescat. Ipse autem extra auctoritatem propriam episcopos Galliarum iudicare non poteris; sed suadendo, blandiendo, bona quoque opera eorum imitationi monstrando, prauorum mentes ad sanctitatis studia reforma; quia scriptum est in lege: 'Per alienam messem transiens falcem mittere non debet, sed manu spicas conterere et manducare.' Falcem enim iudicii mittere non potes in ea segete, quae alteri uidetur esse commissa; sed per affectum boni operis frumenta dominica uitiorum suorum paleis expolia, et in ecclesiae corpore monendo et persuadendo, quasi mandendo conuerte. Quicquid uero ex auctoritate agendum est, cum praedicto Arelatense episcopo agatur, ne praetermitti possit hoc, quod antiqua patrum institutio inuenit. Brittaniarum uero omnes episcopos tuae fraternitati committimus, ut indocti doceantur, infirmi persuasione roborentur, peruersi auctoritate corrigantur.

VIII. Interrogatio Augustini: Si pregnans mulier debeat baptizari?

aut postquam genuerit, post quantum tempus possit ecclesiam intrare?

aut etiam, ne morte praeoccupetur, quod genuerit, post quot dies hcc liceat sacri baptismatis sacramenta percipere? aut post quantum temporis huic uir suus possit in carnis copulatione coniungi? aut, si menstrua consuetudine tenetur, an ecclesiam intrare ei liceat, aut sacrae communionis sacramenta percipere? aut uir suae coniugi permixtus, priusquam lauatur aqua, si ecclesiam possit intrare? uel etiam ad mysterium communionis sacrae accedere? Quae omnia rudi Anglorum genti oportet haberi conperta.

Respondit Gregorius: Hoc non ambigo fraternitatem tuam esse requisitam, cui iam et responsum reddidisse me arbitror. Sed hoc, quod ipse dicere et sentire potuisti, credo, quia mea apud te uolueris responsione firmari. Mulier etenim pregnans cur non debeat baptizari, cum non sit ante omnipotentis Dei oculos culpa aliqua fecunditas carnis? Nam cum primi parentes nostri in paradiso deliquissent, immortalitatem, quam acceperant, recto Dei iudicio perdiderunt. Quia itaque isdem omnipotens Deus humanum genus pro culpa sua funditus extinguere noluit, et immortalitatem homini pro peccato suo abstulit, et tamen pro benignitate suae pietatis fecunditatem ei subolis

reseruauit. Quod ergo naturae humanae ex omnipotentis Dei dono seruatum est, qua ratione poterit a sacri baptismatis gratia prohibere? In illo quippe mysterio, in quo omnis culpa funditus extinguitur, ualde stultum est, si donum gratiae contradicere posse uideatur.

Cum uero enixa fuerit mulier, post quot dies debeat ecclesiam intrare, testamenti ueteris praeceptione didicisti, ut pro masculino diebus XXXIII, pro femina autem diebus LXVI debeat abstinere. Quod tamen sciendum est, quia in mysterio accipitur. Nam si hora eadem, qua genuerit, actura gratias intrat ecclesiam, nullo peccati pondere grauatur; uoluptas ctenim carnis, non dolor in culpa est. In carnis autem commistione uoluptas est; nam in prolis prolatione gemitus.

Unde et ipsi primae matri omnium dicitur: ‘In doloribus paries.’ Si itaque enixam mulierem prohibemus ecclesiam intrare, ipsam ei poenam suam in culpam deputamus. Baptizare autem uel enixam mulierem, uel hoc quod genuerit, si mortis periculo urguetur, uel ipsam hora eadem, qua gignit, uel hoc, quod gignitur, eadem, qua natum est, nullo modo prohibetur; quia sancti mysterii gratia, sicut uiuentibus atque discernentibus cum magna discretione prouidenda est; ita his, quibus mors inminet, sine ulla dilatione offerenda; ne dum adhuc tempus ad praebendum redemptionis mysterium quaeritur, interueniente paululum mora, inueniri non ualeat, qui redimatur.

Ad eius uero concubitus uir suus accedere non debet, quoadusque, qui gignitur, ablactatur. Praua autem in coniugatorum moribus consuetudo surrexit, ut mulieres filios, quos gignunt, nutrire contemnant, eosque aliis mulieribus ad nutriendum tradant, quod uidelicet ex sola causa incontinentiae uidetur inuentum; quia, dum se continere nolunt, despiciunt lactare, quos gignunt. Hae itaque, quae filios suos ex praua consuetudine aliis ad nutriendum tradunt, nisi purgationis tempus transierit, uiris suis non debent admisceri;

quippe quia et sine partus causa, cum in suetis menstruis detinentur, uiris suis misceri prohibentur; ita ut morte lex sacra feriat, si quis uir ad menstruatam mulierem accedat. Quae tamen mulier, dum consuetudinem menstruam patitur, prohiberi ecclesiam intrare non debet, quia ei naturae superfluitas in culpam non ualet reputari; et per hoc, quod inuita patitur, iustum non est, ut ingressu ecclesiae priuetur. Nouimus namque, quod mulier, quae fluxum patiebatur sanguinis, post tergum Domini humiliter ueniens uestimenti eius fimbriam tetigit, atque ab ea statim sua infirmitas recessit. Si ergo in fluxu sanguinis posita laudabiliter potuit Domini uestimentum tangere, cur, quae menstruam sanguinis patitur, ei non liceat Domini ecclesiam intrare? Sed dices: Illam infirmitas conpulit; has uero, de quibus loquimur, consuetudo constringit.

Perpende autem, frater carissime, quia omne, quod in hac mortali carne patimur ex infirmitate naturae, est digno Dei iudicio post culpam ordinatum.

Esurire namque, sitire, aestuare, algere, lassescere ex infirmitate naturae est. Et quid est aliud contra famem alimenta, contra sitim potum, contra aestum auras, contra frigus uestem, contra lassitudinem requiem quaerere, nisi medicamentum quidem contra egritudines explorare? Feminae itaque et menstruus sui sanguinis fluxus egritudo est. Si igitur bene praesumsit, quae uestimentum Domini in langore posita tetigit, quod uni personae infirmanti conceditur, cur non concedatur cunctis mulieribus, quae naturae suae uitio infirmantur?

Sanctae autem communionis mysterium in eisdem diebus percipere non debet prohiberi. Si autem ex ueneratione magna percipere non praesumit, laudanda est; sed si perceperit, non iudicanda. Bonarum quippe mentium est, et ibi aliquo modo culpas suas agnoscere, ubi culpa non est; quia saepe sine culpa agitur, quod uenit ex culpa;

unde etiam cum esurimus, sine culpa comedimus, quibus ex culpa primi hominis factum est, ut esuriamus. Menstrua enim consuetudo mulieribus non aliqua culpa est, uidelicet quae naturaliter accedit.

Sed tamen quod natura ipsa ita uitata est, ut etiam sine uoluntatis studio uideatur esse polluta, ex culpa uenit uitium, in quo se ipsa, qualis per iudicium facta sit, humana natura cognoscat. Et homo, qui culpam sponte perpetravit, reatum culpa portet inuitus. Atque ideo feminae cum semet ipsis considerent, et si in menstrua consuetudine ad sacramentum dominici corporis et sanguinis accedere non praesumant, de sua recta consideratione laudandae sunt; dum uero percipiendo ex religiosae uitae consuetudine eiusdem mysterii amore rapiuntur, reprimendae, sicut praediximus, non sunt. Sicut enim in testamento ueteri exteriora opera obseruantur, ita in testamento nouo non tam, quod exterius agitur, quam id, quod interius cogitatur, sollicita intentione adtenditur, ut subtili sententia puniatur. Nam cum multa lex uelut inmundi manducare prohibeat, in euangelio tamen Dominus dicit: 'Non quod intrat in os, coinquinat hominem; sed quae exeunt de ore, illa sunt, quae coinquinant hominem.' Atque paulo post subiicit exponens: 'Ex corde exeunt cogitationes malae.' Ubi ubertim indicatum est, quia illud ab omnipotente Deo pollutum esse in opere ostenditur, quod ex pollutae cogitationis radice generatur. Unde Paulus quoque apostolus dicit: 'Omnia munda mundis, coinquinatis autem et infidelibus nihil est mundum.' Atque mox eiusdem causam coinquinationis adnuntians subiungit: 'Coinquinata sunt enim et mens eorum et conscientia.' Si ergo ei cibus inmundus non est, cui mens inmundi non fuerit; cur, quod munda mente mulier ex natura patitur, ei in inmunditiam reputetur?

Uir autem cum propria coniuge dormiens, nisi lotus aqua, intrare ecclesiam non debet; sed neque lotus intrare statim debet. Lex autem ueteri populo praecepit, ut mixtus uir mulieri, et lauari aqua debeat, et ante solis occasum ecclesiam non intrare; quod tamen intellegi spiritaliter potest. Quia mulieri uir miscetur, quando illicitae concupiscentiae animus in cogitatione per delectationem coniungitur; quia, nisi prius ignis concupiscentiae a mente

deferueat, dignum se congregationi fratrum aestimare non debet, qui se grauari per nequitiam prauae uoluntatis uidet. Quamuis de hac re diuersae hominum nationes diuersa sentiant, atque alia custodire uideantur, Romanorum tamen semper ab antiquioribus usus fuit, post amixtionem propriae coniugis, et lauacri purificationem quaerere, et ab ingressu ecclesiae paululum reuerenter abstinere Nec haec dicentes culpam deputamus esse coniugium; sed quia ipsa licita amixtio coniugis sine uoluntate carnis fieri non potest, a sacri loci ingressu abstinendum est; quia uoluntas ipsa esse sine culpa nullatenus potest. Non enim de adulterio uel fornicatione, sed de legitimo coniugio natus fuerat, qui dicebat: ‘Ecce enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum, et in delictis peperit me mater mea.’

Qui enim in iniquitatibus conceptum se nouerat, a delicto se natum gemebat; quia portat in ramo umorem uitii, quem traxit ex radice. In quibus tamen uerbis non amixtionem coniugum iniquitatem nominat, sed ipsam uidelicet uoluntatem amixtionis. Sunt etenim multa, quae licita ac legitima, et tamen in eorum actu aliquatenus fedamur;

sicut saepe irascendo culpas insequimur, et tranquillitatem in nobis animi perturbamus; et cum rectum sit, quod agitur, non est tamen adprobabile, quod in eo animus perturbatur. Contra uitia quippe delinquentium iratus fuerat, qui dicebat: ‘Turbatus est prae ira oculus meus.’ Quia enim non uolet nisi tranquilla mens in contemplationis se lucem suspendere, in ira suum oculum turbatum dolebat; quia, dum male acta deorsum insequitur, confundi atque turbari a summorum contemplatione cogeatur. Et laudabilis ergo est ira contra uitium, et tamen molesta, qua turbatum se aliquem reatum incurrisse aestimabat. Oportet itaque legitimam carnis copulam, ut causa prolis sit, non uoluntatis; et carnis commixtio creandorum liberorum sit gratia, non satisfactio uitiorum. Siquis uero suam coniugem non cupidine uoluptatis raptus, sed solummodo creandorum liberorum gratia utitur, iste profecto siue de ingressu ecclesiae, seu de sumendo dominici corporis sanguisque mysterio, suo est iudicio relinquendus; quia a nobis prohiberi non debet accipere, qui in igne positus nescit ardere. Cum uero non amor ortandi subolis, sed uoluntas dominatur in opere commixtionis, habent coniuges etiam de sua commixtione, quod defleant. Hoc enim eis concedit sancta praedicatio, et tamen de ipsa concessione metu animum concutit. Nam cum Paulus apostolus diceret: ‘Qui se continere non potest, habeat uxorem suam,’ statim subiungere curauit: ‘Hoc autem dico secundum indulgentiam, non secundum imperium.’ Non enim indulgetur, quod licet, quia iustum est. Quod igitur indulgere dixit, culpam esse demonstrauit.

Uigilanti uero mente pensandum est, quod in Sina monte Dominus ad populum locuturus prius eundem populum abstinere a mulieribus praecipit. Et si illic, ubi Dominus per creaturam subditam hominibus loquebatur, tanta prouisione est munditia corporis requisita, ut, qui uerba Dei perciperent, mulieribus mixti non essent: quanto magis mulieres, quae corpus Domini

omnipotentis accipiunt, custodire in se munditiam carnis debent, ne ipsa inaeestimabilis mysterii magnitudine grauentur? Hinc etiam ad Dauid de pueris suis per sacerdotem dicitur, ut si a mulieribus mundi essent, panes propositionis acciperent, quos omnino non acciperent, nisi prius mundos eos Dauid a mulieribus fateretur. Tunc autem uir, qui post amixtionem coniugis lotus aqua fuerit, etiam sacrae communionis mysterium ualet accipere, cum ei iuxta praefinitam sententiam etiam ecclesiam licuerit intrare.

VIII. Interrogatio Augustini: Si post inlusionem, quae per somnium solet accedere, uel corpus Domini quislibet accipere ualeat: uel, si sacerdos sit, sacra mysteria celebrare?

Respondit Gregorius: Hunc quidem testamentum ueteris legis, sicut in superiori capitulo iam diximus, pollutum dicit, et nisi lotum aqua ei usque ad uesperum intrare ecclesiam non concedit. Quod tamen aliter populus spiritualis intellegens sub eodem intellectu accipiet, quo praefati sumus; quia quasi per somnium inluditur, qui temptatus inmunditia, ueris imaginibus in cogitatione inquinatur; sed lauandus est aqua, ut culpas cogitationis lacrimis abluat; et nisi prius ignis temptationis reciderit, reum se quasi usque ad uesperum cognoscat. Sed est in eadem inlusione ualde necessaria discretio, quae subtiliter pensari debet, ex qua re accedat menti dormientis;

aliquando enim ex crapula, aliquando ex naturae superfluitate uel infirmitate, aliquando ex cogitatione contingit. Et quidem cum ex naturae superfluitate uel infirmitate euenerit, omnimodo haec inlusio non est timenda; quia hanc animum nescientem pertulisse magis dolendum est, quam fecisse. Cum uero ultra modum appetitus gulae in sumendis alimentis rapitur, atque idcirco umorum receptacula grauantur, habet exinde animus aliquem reatum, non tamen usque ad prohibitionem percipiendi sancti mysterii uel missarum sollemnia celebrandi; cum fortasse aut festus dies exigit, aut exhiberi mysterium (pro eo, quod sacerdos alius in loco deest) ipsa necessitas compellit. Nam si adsunt alii, qui implere ministerium ualeant, inlusio pro crapula facta a perceptione sacri mysterii prohibere non debet; sed ab immolatione sacri mysterii abstinere, ut arbitror, humiliter debet; si tamen dormientis mentem turpi imaginatione non concusserit. Nam sunt, quibus ita plerumque inlusio nascitur, ut eorum animus, etiam in somno corporis positus, turpibus imaginationibus non fedetur. Qua in re unum ibi ostenditur ipsa mens rea, non tamen uel suo iudicio libera, cum se, etsi dormienti corpore, nihil meminit uidisse, tamen in uigiliis corporis meminit in ingluuiem cecidisse. Sin uero ex turpi cogitatione uigilantis oritur inlusio dormientis, patet animo reatus suus; uidet enim, a qua radice inquinatio illa processerit, quia, quod cogitauit sciens, hoc pertulit nesciens. Sed pensandum est, ipsa cogitatio utrum suggestionem an delectationem, uel, quod maius est, peccati consensu acciderit. Tribus enim modis impletur omne peccatum, uidelicet suggestionem, delectationem, consensum. Suggestio quippe fit per diabolum, delectatio per carnem, consensus per spiritum; quia et primam culpam serpens suggessit,

Eua uelut caro delectata est, Adam uero uelut spiritus consensit; et necessaria est magna discretio, ut inter suggestionem atque delectationem, inter delectationem et consensum iudex sui animus praesideat. Cum enim malignus spiritus peccatum suggerit in mente, si nulla peccati delectatio sequatur, peccatum omnimodo perpetratum non est; cum uero delectare caro coeperit, tunc peccatum incipit nasci; si autem etiam ex deliberatione consentit, tunc peccatum cognoscitur perfici. In suggestionem igitur peccati semen est, in delectatione fit nutrimentum, in consensu perfectio. Et saepe contingit, ut hoc, quod malignus spiritus seminat in cogitatione, caro in delectationem trahat; nec tamen anima eidem delectationi consentiat. Et cum caro delectare sine animo nequeat, ipse tamen animus carnis uoluptatibus reluctans, in delectatione carnali aliquo modo ligatur inuitus, ut ei ex ratione contradicat, ne consentiat; et tamen delectatione ligatus sit, sed ligatum se uehementer ingemiscat. Unde et ille caelestis exercitus praecipuus miles gemebat dicens: ‘Uideo aliam legem in membris meis repugnantem legi mentis meae et captiuum me ducentem in lege peccati, quae est in membris meis.’ Si autem captiuus erat, minimè pugnabat; sed et pugnabat; quapropter et captiuus erat, et pugnabat igitur legi mentis, cui lex, quae in membris est, repugnabat. Si autem pugnabat, captiuus non erat. Ecce itaque homo est, ut ita dixerim, captiuus et liber; liber ex iustitia, quam diligit, captiuus ex delectatione, quam portat inuitus.

Chap. XXVII.

How St. Augustine, being made a bishop, sent to acquaint Pope Gregory with what had been done in Britain, and asked and received replies, of which he stood in need. [597-601 a.d.]

In the meantime, Augustine, the man of God, went to Arles, and, according to the orders received from the holy Father Gregory, was ordained archbishop of the English nation, by Aetherius, archbishop of that city. Then returning into Britain, he sent Laurentius the priest and Peter the monk to Rome, to acquaint Pope Gregory, that the English nation had received the faith of Christ, and that he was himself made their bishop. At the same time, he desired his solution of some doubts which seemed urgent to him. He soon received fitting answers to his questions, which we have also thought meet to insert in this our history:

The First Question of the blessed Augustine, Bishop of the Church of Canterbury. — Concerning bishops, what should be their manner of conversation towards their clergy? or into how many portions the offerings of the faithful at the altar are to be divided? and how the bishop is to act in the Church?

Gregory, Pope of the City of Rome, answers. — Holy Scripture, in which we doubt not you are well versed, testifies to this, and in particular the

Epistles of the Blessed Paul to Timothy, wherein he endeavours to show him what should be his manner of conversation in the house of God; but it is the custom of the Apostolic see to prescribe these rules to bishops when they are ordained: that all emoluments which accrue, are to be divided into four portions; — one for the bishop and his household, for hospitality and entertainment of guests; another for the clergy; a third for the poor; and the fourth for the repair of churches. But in that you, my brother, having been instructed in monastic rules, must not live apart from your clergy in the Church of the English, which has been lately, by the will of God, converted to the faith, you must establish the manner of conversation of our fathers in the primitive Church, among whom, none said that aught of the things which they possessed was his own, but they had all things common.

But if there are any clerks not received into holy orders, who cannot live continent, they are to take wives, and receive their stipends outside of the community; because we know that it is written concerning the same fathers of whom we have spoken that a distribution was made unto every man according as he had need. Care is also to be taken of their stipends, and provision to be made, and they are to be kept under ecclesiastical rule, that they may live orderly, and attend to singing of psalms, and, by the help of God, preserve their hearts and tongues and bodies from all that is unlawful. But as for those that live in common, there is no need to say anything of assigning portions, or dispensing hospitality and showing mercy; inasmuch as all that they have over is to be spent in pious and religious works, according to the teaching of Him who is the Lord and Master of all, “Give alms of such things as ye have over, and behold all things are clean unto you.”

Augustine’s Second Question. — Whereas the faith is one and the same, are there different customs in different Churches? and is one custom of Masses observed in the holy Roman Church, and another in the Church of Gaul?

Pope Gregory answers. — You know, my brother, the custom of the Roman Church in which you remember that you were bred up. But my will is, that if you have found anything, either in the Roman, or the Gallican, or any other Church, which may be more acceptable to Almighty God, you should carefully make choice of the same, and sedulously teach the Church of the English, which as yet is new in the faith, whatsoever you can gather from the several Churches. For things are not to be loved for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things. Choose, therefore, from every Church those things that are pious, religious, and right, and when you have, as it were, made them up into one bundle, let the minds of the English be accustomed thereto.

Augustine’s Third Question. — I beseech you, what punishment must be inflicted on one who steals anything from a church?

Gregory answers. — You may judge, my brother, by the condition of the thief, in what manner he is to be corrected. For there are some, who, having substance, commit theft; and there are others, who transgress in this matter through want. Wherefore it is requisite, that some be punished with fines, others with stripes; some with more severity, and some more mildly. And when the severity is greater, it is to proceed from charity, not from anger; because this is done for the sake of him who is corrected, that he may not be delivered up to the fires of Hell. For it behoves us to maintain discipline among the faithful, as good parents do with their children according to the flesh, whom they punish with stripes for their faults, and yet they design to make those whom they chastise their heirs, and preserve their possessions for those whom they seem to visit in wrath. This charity is, therefore, to be kept in mind, and it dictates the measure of the punishment, so that the mind may do nothing beyond the rule prescribed by reason. You will add to this, how men are to restore those things which they have stolen from the church. But let not the Church take more than it has lost of its worldly possessions, or seek gain from vanities.

Augustine's Fourth Question. — Whether two full brothers may marry two sisters, who are of a family far removed from them?

Gregory answers. — Most assuredly this may lawfully be done; for nothing is found in Holy Writ on this matter that seems to contradict it.

Augustine's Fifth Question. — To what degree may the faithful marry with their kindred? and is it lawful to marry a stepmother or a brother's wife?

Gregory answers. — A certain secular law in the Roman commonwealth allows, that the son and daughter of a brother and sister, or of two full brothers, or two sisters, may be joined in matrimony; but we have found, by experience, that the offspring of such wedlock cannot grow up; and the Divine law forbids a man to “uncover the nakedness of his kindred.” Hence of necessity it must be the third or fourth generation of the faithful, that can be lawfully joined in matrimony; for the second, which we have mentioned, must altogether abstain from one another. To marry with one's stepmother is a heinous crime, because it is written in the Law, “Thou shalt not uncover the nakedness of thy father:” now the son, indeed, cannot uncover his father's nakedness; but in regard that it is written, “They twain shall be one flesh,” he that presumes to uncover the nakedness of his stepmother, who was one flesh with his father, certainly uncovers the nakedness of his father. It is also prohibited to marry with a sister-in-law, because by the former union she is become the brother's flesh. For which thing also John the Baptist was beheaded, and obtained the crown of holy martyrdom. For, though he was not ordered to deny Christ, and it was not for confessing Christ that he was killed, yet inasmuch as the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, said, “I am the Truth,” because John was killed for the truth, he also shed his blood for Christ.

But forasmuch as there are many of the English, who, whilst they were still heathens, are said to have been joined in this unholy union, when they attain to the faith they are to be admonished to abstain, and be made to know that this is a grievous sin. Let them fear the dread judgement of God, lest, for the gratification of their carnal desires, they incur the torments of eternal punishment. Yet they are not on this account to be deprived of the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ, lest they should seem to be punished for those things which they did through ignorance before they had received Baptism. For in these times the Holy Church chastises some things with zeal, and tolerates some in mercy, and is blind to some in her wisdom, and so, by forbearance and blindness often suppresses the evil that stands in her way. But all that come to the faith are to be admonished not to presume to do such things. And if any shall be guilty of them, they are to be excluded from the Communion of the Body and Blood of Christ. For as the offence is, in some measure, to be tolerated in those who did it through ignorance, so it is to be rigorously punished in those who do not fear to sin knowingly.

Augustine's Sixth Question. — Whether a bishop may be consecrated without other bishops being present, if there be so great a distance between them, that they cannot easily come together?

Gregory answers. — In the Church of England, of which you are as yet the only bishop, you cannot otherwise ordain a bishop than in the absence of other bishops. For when do bishops come over from Gaul, that they may be present as witnesses to you in ordaining a bishop? But we would have you, my brother, to ordain bishops in such a manner, that the said bishops may not be far asunder, to the end that there be no lack, but that at the ordination of a bishop other pastors also, whose presence is of great benefit, should easily come together. Thus, when, by the help of God, bishops shall have been ordained in places near to one another, no ordination of a bishop is to take place without assembling three or four bishops. For, even in spiritual affairs, we may take example by the temporal, that they may be wisely and discreetly conducted. For surely, when marriages are celebrated in the world, some married persons are assembled, that those who went before in the way of matrimony, may also partake in the joy of the new union. Why, then, at this spiritual ordinance, wherein, by means of the sacred ministry, man is joined to God, should not such persons be assembled, as may either rejoice in the advancement of the new bishop, or jointly pour forth their prayers to Almighty God for his preservation?

Augustine's Seventh Question. — How are we to deal with the bishops of Gaul and Britain?

Gregory answers. — We give you no authority over the bishops of Gaul, because the bishop of Arles received the pall in the old times of my predecessors, and we must by no means deprive him of the authority he has received. If it shall therefore happen, my brother, that you go over into the

province of Gaul, you are to concert with the said bishop of Arles, how, if there be any faults among the bishops, they may be amended. And if he shall be lukewarm in keeping up discipline, he is to be fired by your zeal; to whom we have also written, that aided by the presence of your Holiness in Gaul, he should exert himself to the utmost, and put away from the behaviour of the bishops all that is opposed to the command of our Creator. But you shall not have power to go beyond your own authority and judge the bishops of Gaul, but by persuading, and winning them, and showing good works for them to imitate, you shall recall the perverted to the pursuit of holiness; for it is written in the Law, "When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest bruise the ears with thine hand and eat; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbours' standing corn." For thou mayest not apply the sickle of judgement in that harvest which thou seest to have been committed to another; but by the influence of good works thou shalt clear the Lord's wheat of the chaff of its vices, and convert it by exhortation and persuasion in the body of the Church, as it were, by eating. But whatsoever is to be done by authority, must be transacted with the aforesaid bishop of Arles, lest that should be omitted, which the ancient institution of the fathers has appointed. But as for all the bishops of Britain, we commit them to your care, that the unlearned may be taught, the weak strengthened by persuasion, and the perverse corrected by authority.

Augustine's Eighth Question. — Whether a woman with child ought to be baptized? Or when she has brought forth, after what time she may come into the church? As also, after how many days the infant born may be baptized, lest he be prevented by death? Or how long after her husband may have carnal knowledge of her? Or whether it is lawful for her to come into the church when she has her courses, or to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion? Or whether a man, under certain circumstances, may come into the church before he has washed with water? Or approach to receive the Mystery of the Holy Communion? All which things are requisite to be known by the ignorant nation of the English.

Gregory answers. — I do not doubt but that these questions have been put to you, my brother, and I think I have already answered you therein. But I believe you would wish the opinion which you yourself might give and hold to be confirmed by my reply also. Why should not a woman with child be baptized, since the fruitfulness of the flesh is no offence in the eyes of Almighty God? For when our first parents sinned in Paradise, they forfeited the immortality which they had received, by the just judgement of God. Because, therefore, Almighty God would not for their fault wholly destroy the human race, he both deprived man of immortality for his sin, and, at the same time, of his great goodness and loving-kindness, reserved to him the power of propagating his race after him. On what ground, then, can that which is preserved to human nature by the free gift of Almighty God, be excluded from

the privilege of Holy Baptism? For it is very foolish to imagine that the gift can be opposed to grace in that Mystery in which all sin is blotted out. When a woman is delivered, after how many days she may come into the church, you have learnt from the teaching of the Old Testament, to wit, that she is to abstain for a male child thirty-three days, and sixty-six for a female. Now you must know that this is to be received in a mystery; for if she enters the church the very hour that she is delivered, to return thanks, she is not guilty of any sin; because the pleasure of the flesh is a fault, and not the pain; but the pleasure is in the copulation of the flesh, whereas there is pain in bringing forth the child. Wherefore it is said to the first mother of all, "In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children." If, therefore, we forbid a woman that has brought forth, to enter the church, we make a crime of her very punishment. To baptize either a woman who has brought forth, if there be danger of death, even the very hour that she brings forth, or that which she has brought forth the very hour it is born, is in no way prohibited, because, as the grace of the Holy Mystery is to be with much discretion provided for those who are in full life and capable of understanding, so is it to be without any delay administered to the dying; lest, while a further time is sought to confer the Mystery of redemption, if a small delay intervene, the person that is to be redeemed be dead and gone.

Her husband is not to approach her, till the infant born be weaned. An evil custom is sprung up in the lives of married people, in that women disdain to suckle the children whom they bring forth, and give them to other women to suckle; which seems to have been invented on no other account but incontinency; because, as they will not be continent, they will not suckle the children whom they bear. Those women, therefore, who, from evil custom, give their children to others to bring up, must not approach their husbands till the time of purification is past. For even when there has been no child-birth, women are forbidden to do so, whilst they have their courses, insomuch that the Law condemns to death any man that shall approach unto a woman during her uncleanness. Yet the woman, nevertheless, must not be forbidden to come into the church whilst she has her courses; because the superfluity of nature cannot be imputed to her as a crime; and it is not just that she should be refused admittance into the church, for that which she suffers against her will. For we know, that the woman who had the issue of blood, humbly approaching behind our Lord's back, touched the hem of his garment, and her infirmity immediately departed from her. If, therefore, she that had an issue of blood might commendably touch the garment of our Lord, why may not she, who has her courses, lawfully enter into the church of God? But you may say, Her infirmity compelled her, whereas these we speak of are bound by custom. Consider, then, most dear brother, that all we suffer in this mortal flesh, through the infirmity of our nature, is ordained by the just judgement of God after the fall; for to hunger, to thirst, to be hot, to be cold, to be weary, is from the infirmity of our nature; and what else is it to seek food against hunger,

drink against thirst, air against heat, clothes against cold, rest against weariness, than to procure a remedy against distempers? Thus to a woman her courses are a distemper. If, therefore, it was a commendable boldness in her, who in her disease touched our Lord's garment, why may not that which is allowed to one infirm person, be granted to all women, who, through the fault of their nature, are rendered infirm?

She must not, therefore, be forbidden to receive the Mystery of the Holy Communion during those days. But if any one out of profound respect does not presume to do it, she is to be commended; yet if she receives it, she is not to be judged. For it is the part of noble minds in some manner to acknowledge their faults, even when there is no fault; because very often that is done without a fault, which, nevertheless, proceeded from a fault. Thus, when we are hungry, it is no sin to eat; yet our being hungry proceeds from the sin of the first man. The courses are no sin in women, because they happen naturally; yet, because our nature itself is so depraved, that it appears to be defiled even without the concurrence of the will, a defect arises from sin, and thereby human nature may itself know what it is become by judgement. And let man, who wilfully committed the offence, bear the guilt of that offence against his will. And, therefore, let women consider with themselves, and if they do not presume, during their courses, to approach the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of our Lord, they are to be commended for their praiseworthy consideration; but when they are carried away with love of the same Mystery to receive it according to the custom of the religious life, they are not to be restrained, as we said before. For as in the Old Testament the outward works are observed, so in the New Testament, that which is outwardly done, is not so diligently regarded as that which is inwardly thought, that the punishment may be with discernment. For whereas the Law forbids the eating of many things as unclean, yet our Lord says in the Gospel, "Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man." And afterwards he added, expounding the same, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts." Where it is abundantly shown, that that is declared by Almighty God to be polluted in deed, which springs from the root of a polluted thought. Whence also Paul the Apostle says, "Unto the pure all things are pure, but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure." And presently, declaring the cause of that defilement, he adds, "For even their mind and conscience is defiled." If, therefore, meat is not unclean to him whose mind is not unclean, why shall that which a woman suffers according to nature, with a clean mind, be imputed to her as uncleanness?

A man who has approached his own wife is not to enter the church unless washed with water, nor is he to enter immediately although washed. The Law prescribed to the ancient people, that a man in such cases should be washed with water, and not enter into the church before the setting of the sun. Which, nevertheless, may be understood spiritually, because a man acts so when the

mind is led by the imagination to unlawful concupiscence; for unless the fire of concupiscence be first driven from his mind, he is not to think himself worthy of the congregation of the brethren, while he sees himself burdened by the iniquity of a perverted will. For though divers nations have divers opinions concerning this affair, and seem to observe different rules, it was always the custom of the Romans, from ancient times, for such an one to seek to be cleansed by washing, and for some time reverently to forbear entering the church. Nor do we, in so saying, assign matrimony to be a fault; but forasmuch as lawful intercourse cannot be had without the pleasure of the flesh, it is proper to forbear entering the holy place, because the pleasure itself cannot be without a fault. For he was not born of adultery or fornication, but of lawful marriage, who said, "Behold I was conceived in iniquity, and in sin my mother brought me forth." For he who knew himself to have been conceived in iniquity, lamented that he was born from sin, because he bears the defect, as a tree bears in its bough the sap it drew from the root. In which words, however, he does not call the union of the married couple iniquity, but the will itself. For there are many things which are lawful and permitted, and yet we are somewhat defiled in doing them. As very often by being angry we correct faults, and at the same time disturb our own peace of mind; and though that which we do is right, yet it is not to be approved that our mind should be disturbed. For he who said, "My eye was disturbed with anger," had been angry at the vices of sinners. Now, seeing that only a calm mind can rest in the light of contemplation, he grieved that his eye was disturbed with anger; because, whilst he was correcting evil actions below, he was obliged to be confused and disturbed with regard to the contemplation of the highest things. Anger against vice is, therefore, commendable, and yet painful to a man, because he thinks that by his mind being agitated, he has incurred some guilt. Lawful commerce, therefore, must be for the sake of children, not of pleasure; and must be to procure offspring, not to satisfy vices. But if any man is led not by the desire of pleasure, but only for the sake of getting children, such a man is certainly to be left to his own judgement, either as to entering the church, or as to receiving the Mystery of the Body and Blood of our Lord, which he, who being placed in the fire cannot burn, is not to be forbidden by us to receive. But when, not the love of getting children, but of pleasure prevails, the pair have cause to lament their deed. For this the holy preaching concedes to them, and yet fills the mind with dread of the very concession. For when Paul the Apostle said, "Let him that cannot contain have his own wife;" he presently took care to subjoin, "But this I say by way of permission, not of commandment." For that is not granted by way of permission which is lawful, because it is just; and, therefore, that which he said he permitted, he showed to be an offence.

It is seriously to be considered, that when God was about to speak to the people on Mount Sinai, He first commanded them to abstain from women. And if purity of body was there so carefully required, where God spoke to the

people by the means of a creature as His representative, that those who were to hear the words of God should abstain; how much more ought women, who receive the Body of Almighty God, to preserve themselves in purity of flesh, lest they be burdened with the very greatness of that inestimable Mystery? For this reason also, it was said to David, concerning his men, by the priest, that if they were clean in this particular, they should receive the shewbread, which they would not have received at all, had not David first declared them to be clean. Then the man, who, afterwards, has been washed with water, is also capable of receiving the Mystery of the Holy Communion, when it is lawful for him, according to what has been before declared, to enter the church.

Augustine's Ninth Question. — Whether after an illusion, such as is wont to happen in a dream, any man may receive the Body of our Lord, or if he be a priest, celebrate the Divine Mysteries?

Gregory answers. — The Testament of the Old Law, as has been said already in the article above, calls such a man polluted, and allows him not to enter into the church till the evening, after being washed with water. Which, nevertheless, a spiritual people, taking in another sense, will understand in the same manner as above; because he is imposed upon as it were in a dream, who, being tempted with uncleanness, is defiled by real representations in thought, and he is to be washed with water, that he may cleanse away the sins of thought with tears; and unless the fire of temptation depart before, may know himself to be in a manner guilty until the evening. But a distinction is very necessary in that illusion, and one must carefully consider what causes it to arise in the mind of the person sleeping; for sometimes it proceeds from excess of eating or drinking; sometimes from the superfluity or infirmity of nature, and sometimes from the thoughts. And when it happens either through superfluity or infirmity of nature, such an illusion is not to be feared at all, because it is to be lamented, that the mind of the person, who knew nothing of it, suffers the same, rather than that he occasioned it. But when the appetite of gluttony commits excess in food, and thereupon the receptacles of the humours are oppressed, the mind thence contracts some guilt; yet not so much as to hinder the receiving of the Holy Mystery, or celebrating Mass, when a holy day requires it, or necessity obliges the Mystery to be shown forth, because there is no other priest in the place; for if there be others who can perform the ministry, the illusion proceeding from over-eating ought not to exclude a man from receiving the sacred Mystery; but I am of opinion he ought humbly to abstain from offering the sacrifice of the Mystery, but not from receiving it, unless the mind of the person sleeping has been disturbed with some foul imagination. For there are some, who for the most part so suffer the illusion, that their mind, even during the sleep of the body, is not defiled with filthy thoughts. In which case, one thing is evident, that the mind is guilty, not being acquitted even in its own judgement; for though it does not remember to have seen anything whilst the body was sleeping, yet it calls to

mind that, when the body was awake, it fell into gluttony. But if the illusion of the sleeper proceeds from evil thoughts when he was awake, then its guilt is manifest to the mind; for the man perceives from what root that defilement sprang, because what he had consciously thought of, that he afterwards unconsciously endured. But it is to be considered, whether that thought was no more than a suggestion, or proceeded to delight, or, what is worse, consented to sin. For all sin is committed in three ways, viz., by suggestion, by delight, and by consent. Suggestion comes from the Devil, delight from the flesh, and consent from the spirit. For the serpent suggested the first offence, and Eve, as flesh, took delight in it, but Adam, as the spirit, consented. And when the mind sits in judgement on itself, it must clearly distinguish between suggestion and delight, and between delight and consent. For when the evil spirit suggests a sin to the mind, if there ensue no delight in the sin, the sin is in no way committed; but when the flesh begins to take delight in it, then sin begins to arise. But if it deliberately consents, then the sin is known to be full-grown. The seed, therefore, of sin is in the suggestion, the nourishment of it in delight, its maturity in the consent. And it often happens that what the evil spirit sows in the thought, in that the flesh begins to find delight, and yet the soul does not consent to that delight. And whereas the flesh cannot be delighted without the mind, yet the mind struggling against the pleasures of the flesh, is after a manner unwillingly bound by the carnal delight, so that through reason it opposes it, and does not consent, yet being bound by delight, it grievously laments being so bound. Wherefore that great soldier of our Lord's host, groaned and said, "I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members." Now if he was a captive, he did not fight; but he did fight; wherefore he was a captive and at the same time therefore fought against the law of the mind, which the law that is in the members opposed; but if he fought, he was no captive. Thus, then, man is, as I may say, a captive and yet free. Free on account of justice, which he loves, a captive by the delight which he unwillingly bears within him.

CHAP. 28

Hucusque responsiones beati papae Gregorii ad consulta reuerentissimi antistitis Augustini. Epistolam uero, quam se Arelatensi episcopo fecisse commemorat, ad Uergilium Aetherii successorem dederat; cuius haec forma est:

‘Reuerentissimo et sanctissimo fratri Uergilio coepiscopo Gregorius seruus seruorum Dei.

Quantus sit affectus uenientibus sponte fratribus inpendendus, ex eo, quod plerumque solent caritatis causa inuitari, cognoscitur. Et ideo, si communem fratrem Augustinum episcopum ad uos uenire contigerit, ita illum dilectio uestra, sicut decet, affectuose dulciterque suscipiat, ut et ipsum consolationis suae bono refoueat, et alios, qualiter fraterna caritas colenda sit, doceat. Et quoniam sapius euenit, ut hi, qui longe sunt positi, prius ab aliis, quae sunt emendanda, cognoscant; siquas fortasse fraternitati uestrae sacerdotum uel aliorum culpas intulerit, una cum eo residentes subtili cuncta inuestigatione perquirite, et ita uos in ea, quae Deum offendunt, et ad iracundiam prouocant, districtos ac sollicitos exhibete, ut ad aliorum emendationem et uindicta culpabilem feriat, et innocentem falsa opinio non affligat. Deus te incolumem custodiat, reuerentissime frater.

Data die X Kalendarum Iuliarum, imperante domino nostro Mauricio Tiberio piissimo Augusto anno XIX, post consulatum eiusdem domini anno XVIII, indictione IIII.’

Chap. XXVIII.

How Pope Gregory wrote to the bishop of Arles to help Augustine in the work of God. [601 a.d.]

Thus far the answers of the holy Pope Gregory, to the questions of the most reverend prelate, Augustine. Now the letter, which he says he had written to the bishop of Arles, was directed to Vergilius, successor to Aetherius, and was in the following words:

“To his most reverend and holy brother and fellow bishop, Vergilius; Gregory, servant of the servants of God. With how much kindness brethren, coming of their own accord, are to be entertained, is shown by this, that they are for the most part invited for the sake of brotherly love. Therefore, if our common brother, Bishop Augustine, shall happen to come to you, let your love, as is becoming, receive him with so great kindness and affection, that it may refresh him by the benefit of its consolation and show to others how brotherly charity is to be cultivated. And, since it often happens that those who are at a distance first learn from others the things that need correction, if

he bring before you, my brother, any sins of bishops or others, do you, in conjunction with him, carefully inquire into the same, and show yourself so strict and earnest with regard to those things which offend God and provoke His wrath, that for the amendment of others, the punishment may fall upon the guilty, and the innocent may not suffer under false report. God keep you in safety, most reverend brother. Given the 22nd day of June, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the eighteenth year after the consulship of our said lord, and the fourth indiction.”

CHAP. 29

Praeterea idem papa Gregorius Augustino episcopo, quia suggererat ei multam quidem sibi esse messem, sed operarios paucos, misit cum praefatis legatariis suis plures cooperatores ac uerbi ministros; in quibus primi et praecipui erant Mellitus, Iustus, Paulinus, Rufinianus; et per eos generaliter uniuersa, quae ad cultum erant ac ministerium ecclesiae necessaria, uasa uidelicet sacra, et uestimenta altarium, ornamenta quoque ecclesiarum, et sacerdotalia uel clericilia indumenta, sanctorum etiam apostolorum ac martyrum reliquias, nec non et codices plurimos. Misit etiam litteras, in quibus significat se ei pallium direxisse, simul et insinuat, qualiter episcopos in Brittaniam constituere debuisset;

quarum litterarum iste est textus: ‘Reuerentissimo et sanctissimo fratri Augustino coepiscopo Gregorius seruus seruorum Dei.

Cum certum sit pro omnipotente Deo laborantibus ineffabilia aeterni regni praemia reseruari; nobis tamen eis necesse est honorum beneficia tribuere, ut in spiritalis operis studio ex remuneratione ualcant multiplicius insudare. Et quia noua Anglorum ecclesia ad omnipotentis Dei gratiam eodem Domino largiente, et te laborante perducta est, usum tibi pallii in ea ad sola missarum sollemnia agenda concedimus, ita ut per loca singula XII episcopos ordines, qui tuae subiaceant dicioni, quatinus Lundoniensis ciuitatis episcopus semper in posterum a synodo propria debeat consecrari, atque honoris pallium ab hac sancta et apostolica, cui Deo auctore descripto, sed percipiat. Ad Eburacam uero ciuitatem te uolumus episcopum mittere, quem ipse iudicaucris ordinare; ita duntaxat, ut, si eadem ciuitas cum finitimis locis uerbum Dei receperit, ipse quoque XII episcopos ordinet, et metropolitani honore perfruatur;

quia ei quoque, si uita comes fuerit, pallium tribuere Domino fauente disponimus, quem tamen tuae fraternitatis uolumus dispositioni subiacere; post obitum uero tuum ita episcopis, quos ordinauerit, praesit, ut Lundoniensis episcopi nullo modo dicioni subiaceat. Sit uero inter Lundoniae et Eburacae ciuitatis episcopos in posterum honoris ista distinctio, ut ipse prior habeatur, qui prius fuerit ordinatus; communi autem consilio, et concordii actione quaeque sunt pro Christi zelo agenda disponant unanimiter; recte sentiant, et ea, quae senserint, non sibimet discrepando perficiant.

Tua uero fraternitas non solum eos episcopos, quos ordinauerit, neque hos tantummodo, qui per Eburacae episcopum fuerint ordinati, sed etiam omnes Brittaniae sacerdotes habeat Deo Domino nostro Iesu Christo auctore subiectos; quatinus ex lingua et uita tuae sanctitatis et recte credendi, et bene uiuendi formam percipiant, atque officium suum fide ac moribus exsequentes, ad caelestia, cum Dominus uoluerit, regna pertingant. Deus te incolumem custodiat, reuerentissime frater.

Data die X. Kalendarum Iuliarum, imperante domino nostro Mauricio Tiberio piissimo Augusto anno XVIII, post consulatum eiusdem domini anno XVIII, indictione III.

Chap. XXIX.

How the same Pope sent to Augustine the Pall and a letter, along with several ministers of the Word. [601 a.d.]

Moreover, the same Pope Gregory, hearing from Bishop Augustine, that the harvest which he had was great and the labourers but few, sent to him, together with his aforesaid envoys, certain fellow labourers and ministers of the Word, of whom the chief and foremost were Mellitus, Justus, Paulinus, and Rufinianus, and by them all things in general that were necessary for the worship and service of the Church, to wit, sacred vessels and altar-cloths, also church-furniture, and vestments for the bishops and clerks, as likewise relics of the holy Apostles and martyrs; besides many manuscripts. He also sent a letter, wherein he signified that he had despatched the pall to him, and at the same time directed how he should constitute bishops in Britain. The letter was in these words:

“To his most reverend and holy brother and fellow bishop, Augustine; Gregory, the servant of the servants of God. Though it be certain, that the unspeakable rewards of the eternal kingdom are reserved for those who labour for Almighty God, yet it is requisite that we bestow on them the benefit of honours, to the end that they may by this recompense be encouraged the more vigorously to apply themselves to the care of their spiritual work. And, seeing that the new Church of the English is, through the bounty of the Lord, and your labours, brought to the grace of God, we grant you the use of the pall in the same, only for the celebration of the solemn service of the Mass; that so you may ordain twelve bishops in different places, who shall be subject to your jurisdiction. But the bishop of London shall, for the future, be always consecrated by his own synod, and receive the pall, which is the token of his office, from this holy and Apostolic see, which I, by the grace of God, now serve. But we would have you send to the city of York such a bishop as you shall think fit to ordain; yet so, that if that city, with the places adjoining, shall receive the Word of God, that bishop shall also ordain twelve bishops, and enjoy the honour of a metropolitan; for we design, if we live, by the help of God, to bestow on him also the pall; and yet we would have him to be subject to your authority, my brother; but after your decease, he shall so preside over the bishops he shall have ordained, as to be in no way subject to the jurisdiction of the bishop of London. But for the future let there be this distinction as regards honour between the bishops of the cities of London and York, that he who has been first ordained have the precedence. But let them take counsel and act in concert and with one mind dispose whatsoever is to be

done for zeal of Christ; let them judge rightly, and carry out their judgement without dissension.

“But to you, my brother, shall, by the authority of our God and Lord Jesus Christ, be subject not only those bishops whom you shall ordain, and those that shall be ordained by the bishop of York, but also all the prelates in Britain; to the end that from the words and manner of life of your Holiness they may learn the rule of a right belief and a good life, and fulfilling their office in faith and righteousness, they may, when it shall please the Lord, attain to the kingdom of Heaven. God preserve you in safety, most reverend brother.

“Given the 22nd of June, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the eighteenth year after the consulship of our said lord, and the fourth indiction.”

CHAP. 30

Abeuntibus autem praefatis legatariis, misit post eos beatus pater Gregorius litteras memoratu dignas, in quibus aperte, quam studiose erga saluationem nostrae gentis inuigilauerit, ostendit, ita scribens:

‘Dilectissimo filio Mellito abbati Gregorius seruus seruorum Dei.

Post discessum congregationis nostrae, quae tecum est, ualde sumus suspensi reddit, quia nihil de prosperitate uestri itineris audisse nos contigit. Cum ergo Deus omnipotens uos ad reuerentissimum uirum fratrem nostrum Augustinum episcopum perduxerit, dicite ei, quid diu mecum de causa Anglorum cogitans tractaui; uidelicet, quia fana idolorum destrui in eadem gente minime debeant; sed ipsa, quae in eis sunt, idola destruantur; aqua benedicta fiat, in eisdem fanis aspergatur, altaria construantur, reliquiae ponantur. Quia, si fana eadem bene constructa sunt, necesse est, ut a cultu daemonum in obsequio ueri Dei debeant commutari; ut dum gens ipsa eadem fana sua non uidet destrui, de corde errorem deponat, et Deum uerum cognoscens ac adorans, ad loca, quae consueuit, familiarius concurrat. Et quia boues solent in sacrificio daemonum multos occidere, debet eis etiam hac de re aliqua sollemnitas immutari; ut die dedicationis, uel natalicii sanctorum martyrum, quorum illic reliquiae ponuntur, tabernacula sibi circa easdem ecclesias, quae ex fanis commutatae sunt, de ramis arborum faciant, et religiosi conuiuuiis sollemnitatem celebrent; nec diabolo iam animalia immolent, et ad laudem Dei in esu suo animalia occidant, et donatori omnium de satietate sua gratias referant; ut dum eis aliqua exterius gaudia reseruantur, ad interiora gaudia consentire facilius ualeant.

Nam duris mentibus simul omnia abscidere impossibile esse non dubium est, quia et is, qui summum locum ascendere nititur, gradibus uel passibus, non autem saltibus eleuatur. Sic Israelitico populo in Aegypto Dominus se quidem innotuit; sed tamen eis sacrificiorum usus, quae diabolo solebat exhibere, in culto proprio reseruauit, ut eis in suo sacrificio animalia immolare praeciperet; quatinus cor mutantes, aliud de sacrificio amitterent, aliud retinerent; ut etsi ipsa essent animalia, quae offerre consueuerant, uero tamen Deo haec et non idolis immolantes, iam sacrificia ipsa non essent. Haec igitur dilectionem tuam praedicto fratri necesse est dicere, ut ipse in praesenti illic positus perpendat, qualiter omnia debeat dispensare. Deus te incolumem custodiat, dilectissime fili.

Data die XV. Kalendarum Iuliarum, imperante domino nostro Mauricio Tiberio piissimo Augusto anno XIX, post consulatum eiusdem domini anno XVIII, indictione IIII.

A copy of the letter which Pope Gregory sent to the Abbot Mellitus, then going into Britain. [601 a.d.]

The aforesaid envoys having departed, the blessed Father Gregory sent after them a letter worthy to be recorded, wherein he plainly shows how carefully he watched over the salvation of our country. The letter was as follows:

“To his most beloved son, the Abbot Mellitus; Gregory, the servant of the servants of God. We have been much concerned, since the departure of our people that are with you, because we have received no account of the success of your journey. Howbeit, when Almighty God has led you to the most reverend Bishop Augustine, our brother, tell him what I have long been considering in my own mind concerning the matter of the English people; to wit, that the temples of the idols in that nation ought not to be destroyed; but let the idols that are in them be destroyed; let water be consecrated and sprinkled in the said temples, let altars be erected, and relics placed there. For if those temples are well built, it is requisite that they be converted from the worship of devils to the service of the true God; that the nation, seeing that their temples are not destroyed, may remove error from their hearts, and knowing and adoring the true God, may the more freely resort to the places to which they have been accustomed. And because they are used to slaughter many oxen in sacrifice to devils, some solemnity must be given them in exchange for this, as that on the day of the dedication, or the nativities of the holy martyrs, whose relics are there deposited, they should build themselves huts of the boughs of trees about those churches which have been turned to that use from being temples, and celebrate the solemnity with religious feasting, and no more offer animals to the Devil, but kill cattle and glorify God in their feast, and return thanks to the Giver of all things for their abundance; to the end that, whilst some outward gratifications are retained, they may the more easily consent to the inward joys. For there is no doubt that it is impossible to cut off every thing at once from their rude natures; because he who endeavours to ascend to the highest place rises by degrees or steps, and not by leaps. Thus the Lord made Himself known to the people of Israel in Egypt; and yet He allowed them the use, in His own worship, of the sacrifices which they were wont to offer to the Devil, commanding them in His sacrifice to kill animals, to the end that, with changed hearts, they might lay aside one part of the sacrifice, whilst they retained another; and although the animals were the same as those which they were wont to offer, they should offer them to the true God, and not to idols; and thus they would no longer be the same sacrifices. This then, dearly beloved, it behoves you to communicate to our aforesaid brother, that he, being placed where he is at present, may consider how he is to order all things. God preserve you in safety, most beloved son.

“Given the 17th of June, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, the eighteenth year after the

consulship of our said lord, and the fourth indiction.”

CHAP. 31

Quo in tempore misit etiam Augustino epistolam super miraculis, quae per eum facta esse cognouerat, in qua eum, ne per illorum copiam periculum elationis incurreret, his uerbis hortatur:

Scio, frater carissime, quia omnipotens Deus per dilectionem tuam in gentem, quam eligi uoluit, magna miracula ostendit; unde necesse est, ut de eodem dono caelesti et timendo gaudeas, et gaudento pertimescas. Gaudeas uidelicet, quia Anglorum animae per exteriora miracula ad interiorem gratiam pertrahuntur; pertimescas uero, ne inter signa, quae fiunt, infirmus animus in sui praesumptione se eleuet, et unde foras in honorem tollitur, inde per inanem gloriam intus cadat. Meminisse etenim debemus, quia discipuli cum gaudio a praedicatione redeuntes, dum caelesti magistro dicerent: ‘Domine, in nomine tuo etiam daemonia nobis subiecta sunt,’ protinus audierunt: ‘Nolite gaudere super hoc, sed potius gaudete, quia nomina uestra scripta sunt in caelo.’ In priuata enim et temporali laetitia mentem posuerant, qui de miraculis gaudebant; sed de priuata ad communem, de temporali ad aeternam laetitiam reuocantur, quibus dicitur: ‘In hoc gaudete, quia nomina uestra scripta sunt in caelo.’ Non enim omnes electi miracula faciunt, sed tamen eorum nomina omnium in caelo tenentur adscripta. Ueritatis etenim discipulis esse gaudium non debet, nisi de eo bono, quod commune cum omnibus habent, et in quo finem laetitiae non habent.

Restat itaque, frater carissime, ut inter ea, quae operante Domino exterius facis, semper te interius subtiliter iudices ac subtiliter intellegas et temet ipsum quis sis, et quanta sit in eadem gente gratia, pro cuius conuersione etiam faciendorum signorum dona percepisti. Et si quando te Creatori nostro seu per linguam, siue per operam reminisceris deliquisse, semper haec ad memoriam reuoces, ut surgentem cordis gloriam memoria reatus premat. Et quicquid de faciendis signis acceperis, uel accepisti, haec non tibi, sed illis deutes donata, pro quorum tibi salute collata sunt.

Chap. XXXI.

How Pope Gregory, by letter, exhorted Augustine not to glory in his miracles. [601 a.d.]

At which time he also sent Augustine a letter concerning the miracles that he had heard had been wrought by him; wherein he admonishes him not to incur the danger of being puffed up by the number of them. The letter was in these words:

“I know, dearly beloved brother, that Almighty God, by means of you, shows forth great miracles to the nation which it was His will to choose. Wherefore you must needs rejoice with fear, and fear with joy concerning that

heavenly gift; for you will rejoice because the souls of the English are by outward miracles drawn to inward grace; but you will fear, lest, amidst the wonders that are wrought, the weak mind may be puffed up with self-esteem, and that whereby it is outwardly raised to honour cause it inwardly to fall through vain-glory. For we must call to mind, that when the disciples returned with joy from preaching, and said to their Heavenly Master, ‘Lord, even the devils are subject to us through Thy Name;’ forthwith they received the reply, ‘In this rejoice not; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.’ For their minds were set on private and temporal joys, when they rejoiced in miracles; but they are recalled from the private to the common joy, and from the temporal to the eternal, when it is said to them, ‘Rejoice in this, because your names are written in heaven.’ For all the elect do not work miracles, and yet the names of all are written in heaven. For those who are disciples of the truth ought not to rejoice, save for that good thing which all men enjoy as well as they, and in which their joy shall be without end.

“It remains, therefore, most dear brother, that amidst those outward actions, which you perform through the power of the Lord, you should always carefully judge yourself in your heart, and carefully understand both what you are yourself, and how much grace is bestowed upon that same nation, for the conversion of which you have received even the gift of working miracles. And if you remember that you have at any time sinned against our Creator, either by word or deed, always call it to mind, to the end that the remembrance of your guilt may crush the vanity which rises in your heart. And whatsoever gift of working miracles you either shall receive, or have received, consider the same, not as conferred on you, but on those for whose salvation it has been given you.”

CHAP. 32

Misit idem beatus papa Gregorius eodem tempore etiam regi Aedilbercto epistulam, simul et dona in diuersis speciebus perlura;

temporalibus quoque honoribus regem glorificare satagens, cui gloriae caelestis suo labore et industria notitiam prouenisse gaudebat. Exemplar autem praefatae epistulae hoc est:

Domino gloriosissimo atque praecellentissimo filio Aedilbercto regi Anglorum Gregorius episcopus.

Propter hoc omnipotens Deus bonos quosque ad populorum regimina perducit, ut per eos omnibus, quibus praelati fuerint, dona suae pictatis impendat. Quod in Anglorum gente factum cognouimus, cui uestra gloria idcirco est praeposita, ut per bona, quae uobis concessa sunt, etiam subiectae uobis genti superna beneficia praestarentur. Et ideo, gloriose fili, eam, quam accepisti diuinitus gratiam, sollicita mente custodi, Christianam fidem in populis tibi subditis extendere festina, zelum rectitudinis tuae in eorum conuersione multiplica, idolorum cultus insequere, fanorum aedificia euerte, subditorum mores ex magna uitae munditia, exhortando, terrendo, blandiendo, corrigendo, et boni operis exempla monstrando aedifica; ut illum retributorem inuenias in caelo, cuius nomen atque cognitionem dilataueris in terra. Ipse enim uestrae quoque gloriae nomen etiam posteris gloriosius reddet, cuius uos honorem quaeritis et seruatis in gentibus.

Sic etenim Constantinus quondam piissimus imperator Romanam rempublicam a peruersis idolorum cultibus reuocans omnipotenti Deo Domino nostro Iesu Christo secum subdidit, seque cum subiectis populis tota ad eum mente conuertit. Unde factum est, ut antiquorum principum nomen suis uir ille laudibus uinceret, et tanto in opinione praecessores suos, quanto et in bono opere superaret. Et nunc itaque uestra gloria cognitionem unius Dei, Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti, regibus ac populis sibimet subiectis festinet infundere, ut et antiquos gentis suae reges laudibus ac meritis transeat, et quanto in subiectis suis etiam aliena peccata deteraserit, tanto etiam de peccatis propriis ante omnipotentis Dei terribile examen securior fiat.

Reuerentissimus frater noster Augustinus episcopus in monasterii regula edoctus, sacrae scripturae scientia repletus, bonis auctore Deo operibus praeditus, quaeque uos ammonet, libenter audite, deuote peragite, studiose in memoria reseruate; quia, si uos eum in eo, quod pro omnipotente Deo loquitur, auditis, isdem omnipotens Deus hunc pro uobis exorantem celerius exaudit. Si enim, quod absit, uerba eius postponitis, quando eum omnipotens Deus poterit audire pro uobis, quem uos neglegitis audire pro Deo? Tota igitur mente cum eo uos in feruore fidei stringite, atque adnsum illius uirtute, quam uobis diuinitas tribuit, adiuuate, ut regni sui uos ipse faciat esse participes,

cuius uos fidem in regno uestro recipi facitis et custodiri.

Praeterea scire uestram gloriam uolumus, quia, sicut in scriptura sacra ex uerbis Domini omnipotentis agnoscimus, praesentis mundi iam terminus iuxta est, et sanctorum regnum uenturum est, quod nullo umquam poterit fine terminari. Adpropinquante autem eodem mundi termino, multa imminet, quae antea non fuerunt; uidelicet immutationes aeris, terroresque de caelo, et contra ordinationem temporum tempestates, bella, fames, pestilentiae, terrae motus per loca; quae tamen non omnia nostris diebus uentura sunt, sed post nostros dies omnia subsequuntur. Uos itaque, siqua ex his euenire in terra uestra cognoscitis, nullo modo uestrum animum perturbetis;

quia idcirco haec signa de fine saeculi praemittuntur, ut de animabus nostris debeamus esse solliciti, de mortis hora suspecti, et uenturo Iudici in bonis actibus inueniamur esse praeparati. Haec nunc, gloriose fili, paucis locutus sum, ut cum Christiana fides in regno uestro excreuerit, nostra quoque apud uos locutio latior excrescat, et tanto plus loqui libeat, quanto se in mente nostra gaudia de gentis uestrae perfecta conuersione multiplicant.

Parua autem exenia transmisi, quae uobis parua non erunt, cum a uobis ex beati Petri apostoli fuerint benedictione suscepta.

Omnipotens itaque Deus in uobis gratiam suam, quam coepit, perficiat, atque uitam uestram et hic per multorum annorum curricula extendat, et post longa tempora in caelestis uos patriae congregatione recipiat. Incolumem excellentiam uestram gratia superna custodiat, domine fili.

Data die X. Kalendarum Iuliarum, imperante domino nostro Mauricio Tiberio piissimo Augusto anno XVIII, post consulatum eiusdem domini anno XVIII, indictione III.

Chap. XXXII.

How Pope Gregory sent letters and gifts to King Ethelbert. [601 a.d.]

The same blessed Pope Gregory, at the same time, sent a letter to King Ethelbert, with many gifts of diuers sorts; being desirous to glorify the king with temporal honours, at the same time that he rejoiced that through his own labour and zeal he had attained to the knowledge of heavenly glory. The copy of the said letter is as follows:

“To the most glorious lord, and his most excellent son, Ethelbert, king of the English, Bishop Gregory. Almighty God advances good men to the government of nations, that He may by their means bestow the gifts of His loving-kindness on those over whom they are placed. This we know to have come to pass in the English nation, over whom your Highness was placed, to the end, that by means of the blessings which are granted to you, heavenly benefits might also be conferred on your subjects. Therefore, my illustrious son, do you carefully guard the grace which you have received from the

Divine goodness, and be eager to spread the Christian faith among the people under your rule; in all uprightness increase your zeal for their conversion; suppress the worship of idols; overthrow the structures of the temples; establish the manners of your subjects by much cleanness of life, exhorting, terrifying, winning, correcting, and showing forth an example of good works, that you may obtain your reward in Heaven from Him, Whose Name and the knowledge of Whom you have spread abroad upon earth. For He, Whose honour you seek and maintain among the nations, will also render your Majesty's name more glorious even to posterity.

“For even so the most pious emperor, Constantine, of old, recovering the Roman commonwealth from the false worship of idols, brought it with himself into subjection to Almighty God, our Lord Jesus Christ, and turned to Him with his whole mind, together with the nations under his rule. Whence it followed, that his praises transcended the fame of former princes; and he excelled his predecessors in renown as much as in good works. Now, therefore, let your Highness hasten to impart to the kings and peoples that are subject to you, the knowledge of one God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that you may surpass the ancient kings of your nation in praise and merit, and while you cause the sins of others among your own subjects to be blotted out, become the more free from anxiety with regard to your own sins before the dread judgement of Almighty God.

“Willingly hear, devoutly perform, and studiously retain in your memory, whatsoever counsel shall be given you by our most reverend brother, Bishop Augustine, who is trained up in the monastic rule, full of the knowledge of Holy Scripture, and, by the help of God, endued with good works; for if you give ear to him when he speaks on behalf of Almighty God, the sooner will Almighty God hear his prayers for you. But if (which God forbid!) you slight his words, how shall Almighty God hear him on your behalf, when you neglect to hear him on behalf of God? Unite yourself, therefore, to him with all your mind, in the fervour of faith, and further his endeavours, by that virtue which God has given you, that He may make you partaker of His kingdom, Whose faith you cause to be received and maintained in your own.

“Besides, we would have your Highness know that, as we find in Holy Scripture from the words of the Almighty Lord, the end of this present world, and the kingdom of the saints, which will never come to an end, is at hand. But as the end of the world draws near, many things are about to come upon us which were not before, to wit, changes in the air, and terrors from heaven, and tempests out of the order of the seasons, wars, famines, pestilences, earthquakes in divers places; which things will not, nevertheless, all happen in our days, but will all follow after our days. If, therefore, you perceive that any of these things come to pass in your country, let not your mind be in any way disturbed; for these signs of the end of the world are sent before, for this reason, that we may take heed to our souls, and be watchful for the hour of

death, and may be found prepared with good works to meet our Judge. Thus much, my illustrious son, I have said in few words, with intent that when the Christian faith is spread abroad in your kingdom, our discourse to you may also be more copious, and we may desire to say the more, as joy for the full conversion of your nation is increased in our mind.

“I have sent you some small gifts, which will not appear small to you, when received by you with the blessing of the blessed Apostle, Peter. May Almighty God, therefore, perfect in you His grace which He has begun, and prolong your life here through a course of many years, and in the fulness of time receive you into the congregation of the heavenly country. May the grace of God preserve you in safety, my most excellent lord and son.

“Given the 22nd day of June, in the nineteenth year of the reign of our most religious lord, Mauritius Tiberius Augustus, in the eighteenth year after his consulship, and the fourth indiction.”

CHAP. 33

At Augustinus, ubi in regia ciuitate sedem episcopalem, ut praediximus, accepit, recuperauit in ea, regio fultus adminiculo, ecclesiam, quam inibi antiquo Romanorum fidelium opere factam fuisse didicerat, et eam in nomine sancti Saluatoris Dei et Domini nostri Iesu Christi sacrauit, atque ibidem sibi habitationem statuit et cunctis successoribus suis. Fecit autem et monasterium non longe ab ipsa ciuitate ad orientem, in quo, eius hortatu, Aedilberct ecclesiam beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli a fundamentis construxit, ac diuersis donis ditauit, in qua et ipsius Augustini, et omnium episcoporum Doruuernensium, simul et regum Cantiae poni corpora possent. Quam tamen ecclesiam non ipse Augustinus, sed successor eius Laurentius consecrauit.

Primus autem eiusdem monasterii abbas Petrus presbiter fuit, qui legatus Galliam missus demersus est in sinu maris, qui uocatur Amfleaf, et ab incolis loci ignobili traditus sepulturae; sed omnipotens Deus ut, qualis meriti uir fuerit, demonstraret, omni nocte supra sepulchrum eius lux caelestis apparuit, donec animaduertentes uicini, qui uidebant, sanctum fuisse uirum, qui ibi esset sepultus, et inuestigantes, unde uel quis esset, abstulerunt corpus, et in Bononia ciuitate iuxta honorem tanto uiro congruum in ecclesia posuerunt.

Chap. XXXIII.

How Augustine repaired the church of our Saviour, and built the monastery of the blessed Peter the Apostle; and concerning Peter the first abbot of the same.

Augustine having had his episcopal see granted him in the royal city, as has been said, recovered therein, with the support of the king, a church, which he was informed had been built of old by the faithful among the Romans, and consecrated it in the name of the Holy Saviour, our Divine Lord Jesus Christ, and there established a residence for himself and all his successors. He also built a monastery not far from the city to the eastward, in which, by his advice, Ethelbert erected from the foundation the church of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, and enriched it with divers gifts; wherein the bodies of the same Augustine, and of all the bishops of Canterbury, and of the kings of Kent, might be buried. Nevertheless, it was not Augustine himself who consecrated that church, but Laurentius, his successor.

The first abbot of that monastery was the priest Peter, who, being sent on a mission into Gaul, was drowned in a bay of the sea, which is called Amfleaf, and committed to a humble tomb by the inhabitants of the place; but since it was the will of Almighty God to reveal his merits, a light from Heaven was seen over his grave every night; till the neighbouring people who saw it, perceiving that he had been a holy man that was buried there, and inquiring

who and whence he was, carried away the body, and interred it in the church, in the city of Boulogne, with the honour due to so great a person.

CHAP. 34

His temporibus regno Nordanhymbrorum praefuit rex fortissimus et gloriae cupidissimus Aedilfrid, qui plus omnibus Anglorum primatibus gentem uastauit Brettonum; ita ut Sauli quondam regi Israeliticae gentis comparandus uideretur, excepto dumtaxat hoc, quod diuinae erat religionis ignarus. Nemo enim in tribunis, nemo in regibus plures eorum terras, exterminatis uel subiugatis indigenis, aut tributarias genti Anglorum, aut habitabiles fecit. Cui merito poterat illud, quod benedicens filium patriarcha in personam Saulis dicebat, aptari: ‘Beniamin lupus rapax, mane comedet praedam et uespere diuidet spolia.’

Unde motus eius profectibus Aedan rex Scottorum, qui Britanniam inhabitant, uenit contra eum cum inmenso ac forti exercitu; sed cum paucis uictus aufugit. Siquidem in loco celeberrimo, qui dicitur Degsastann, id est Degsa lapis, omnis pene eius est caesus exercitus. In qua etiam pugna Theodbald frater Aedilfridi cum omni illo, quem ipse ducebat, exercitu peremptus est. Quod uidelicet bellum Aedilfrid anno ab incarnatione Domini DCIII, regni autem sui, quod XX et IIII annis tenuit, anno XI, perfecit; porro anno Focatis, qui tum Romani regni apicem tenebat, primo. Neque ex eo tempore quisquam regum Scottorum in Brittania aduersus gentem Anglorum usque ad hanc diem in proelium uenire audebat.

Chap. XXXIV.

How Ethelfrid, king of the Northumbrians, having vanquished the nations of the Scots, expelled them from the territories of the English. [603 a.d.]

At this time, the brave and ambitious king, Ethelfrid, governed the kingdom of the Northumbrians, and ravaged the Britons more than all the chiefs of the English, insomuch that he might be compared to Saul of old, king of the Israelites, save only in this, that he was ignorant of Divine religion. For he conquered more territories from the Britons than any other chieftain or king, either subduing the inhabitants and making them tributary, or driving them out and planting the English in their places. To him might justly be applied the saying of the patriarch blessing his son in the person of Saul, “Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil.” Hereupon, Aedan, king of the Scots that dwell in Britain, being alarmed by his success, came against him with a great and mighty army, but was defeated and fled with a few followers; for almost all his army was cut to pieces at a famous place, called Degsastan, that is, Degsa Stone. In which battle also Theodbald, brother to Ethelfrid, was killed, with almost all the forces he commanded. This war Ethelfrid brought to an end in the year of our Lord 603, the eleventh of his own reign, which lasted twenty-four years,

and the first year of the reign of Phocas, who then was at the head of the Roman empire. From that time, no king of the Scots durst come into Britain to make war on the English to this day.

LIBER SECUNDUS — BOOK II

CHAP. 1

His temporibus, id est anno dominicae incarnationis DCV, beatus papa Gregorius, postquam sedem Romanae et apostolicae ecclesiae XIII annos, menses VI, et dies X gloriosissime rexit, defunctus est, atque ad aeternam regni caelestis sedem translatus.

De quo nos conuenit, quia nostram, id est Anglorum, gentem de potestate Satanae ad fidem Christi sua industria conuertit, latiore in nostra historia ecclesiastica facere sermonem, quem recte nostrum appellare possumus et debemus apostolum. Quia, cum primum in toto orbe gereret pontificatum, et conuersis iam dudum ad fidem ueritatis esset praelatus ecclesiis, nostram gentem eatenus idolis mancipatam Christi fecit ecclesiam, ita ut apostolicum illum de eo liceat nobis proferre sermonem: quia etsi aliis non est apostolus, sed tamen nobis est; nam signaculum apostolatus eius nos sumus in Domino.

Erat autem natione Romanus, a patre Gordiano, genus a proauis non solum nobile, sed et religiosum ducens. Denique Felix eiusdem apostolicae sedis quondam episcopus, uir magnae gloriae in Christo et ecclesia, eius fuit atauus. Sed ipse nobilitatem religionis non minore quam parentes et cognati uirtute deuotionis exercuit.

Nobilitatem uero illam, quam ad saeculum uidebatur habere, totam ad nanciscendam supernae gloriae dignitatis diuina gratia largiente conuertit. Nam mutato repente habitu saeculari monasterium petiit, in quo tanta perfectionis gratia coepit conuersari, ut, sicut ipse postea flendo solebat adtestari, animo illius labentia cuncta subteressent, ut rebus omnibus, quae uoluuntur, emineret, ut nulla nisi caelestia cogitare soleret, ut etiam retentus corpore ipsa iam carnis claustra contemplatione transiret, ut mortem quoque, quae pene cunctis poena est, uidelicet ut ingressum uitae, et laboris sui praemium amaret. Haec autem ipse de se, non profectum iactando uirtutum, sed deflendo potius defectum, quem sibi per curam pastorem incurrisse uidebatur, referre consuebat. Denique tempore quodam secreto, cum diacono suo Petro conloquens, enumeratis animi sui uirtutibus priscis, mox dolendo subiunxit: ‘At nunc ex occasione curae pastoralis saecularium hominum negotia patitur, et post tam pulchram quietis suae speciem terreni actus puluere fedatur. Cumque se pro condescensione multorum ad exteriora sparserit, etiam cum interiora appetit, ad haec procul dubio minor redit. Perpendo itaque, quid tolero, perpendo, quid amisi; dumque intueor illud, quod perdidici, fit hoc grauius, quod porto.’

Haec quidem sanctus uir ex magnae humilitatis intentione dicebat;

sed nos credere decet nihil eum monachicae perfectionis perdidisse occasione curae pastoralis, immo potius tunc sumsisse profectum de labore conuersionis multorum, quam de propriae quondam quiete conuersionis

habuerat; maxime quia et pontificali functus officio domum suam monasterium facere curauit; et dum primo de monasterio abstractus, ad ministerium altaris ordinatus, atque Constantinopolim apocrisiarius ab apostolica sede directus est, non tamen in terreno conuersatus palatio propositum uitae caelestis intermisit. Nam quosdam fratrum ex monasterio suo, qui eum gratia germanae caritatis ad regiam urbem secuti sunt, in tutamentum coepit obseruantiae regularis habere; uidelicet ut eorum semper exemplo, sicut ipse scribit, ad orationis placidum litus, quasi anchorae fune restringeretur, cum incessabili causarum saecularium impulsu fluctuaret, concussamque saeculi actibus mentem inter eos cotidie per studiosae lectionis roboraret alloquium. Horum ergo consortio non solum a terrenis est munitus incursibus, uerum etiam ad caelestis exercitia uitae magis magisque succensus.

Nam hortati sunt eum, ut librum beati Iob magnis inuolutum obscuritatibus mystica interpretatione discuteret; neque negare potuit opus, quod sibi fraternus amor multis utile futurum inponebat. Sed eundem librum, quomodo iuxta litteram intellegendus, qualiter ad Christi et ecclesiae sacramenta referendus, quo sensu unicuique fidelium sit aptandus, per XXX et V libros expositionis miranda ratione perdocuit. Quod uidelicet opus in regia quidem urbe apocrisiarius inchoauit, Romae autem iam pontifex factus expleuit.

Qui cum adhuc esset regia in urbe positus, nascentem ibi nouam heresim de statu nostrae resurrectionis, cum ipso, quo exorta est, initio, iuuante se gratia catholicae ueritatis, attriuit. Siquidem Eutycius eiusdem urbis episcopus dogmatizabat corpus nostrum in illa resurrectionis gloria inpalpabile, uentis aereque subtilius esse futurum; quod ille audiens, et ratione ueritatis, et exemplo dominicae resurrectionis, probauit hoc dogma orthodoxae fidei omnimodis esse contrarium. Catholica etenim fides habet, quod corpus nostrum illa immortalitatis gloria sublimatum subtile quidem sit per effectum spiritualis potentiae, sed palpabile per ueritatem naturae;

iuxta exemplum dominici corporis, de quo a mortuis suscitato dicit ipse discipulis: ‘Palpate et uidete, quia spiritus carnem et ossa non habet, sicut me uidetis habere.’ In cuius adsertione fidei uenerabilis pater Gregorius in tantum contra nascentem heresim nouam laborare contendit, tanta hanc instantia, iuuante etiam piissimo imperatore Tiberio Constantino, conminuit, ut nullus exinde sit inuentus, qui eius resuscitator existeret.

Alium quoque librum composuit egregium, qui uocatur Pastoralis, in quo manifesta luce patefecit, quales ad ecclesiae regimen adsumi, qualiter ipsi rectores uiuere, qua discretione singulas quasque audientium instruere personas, et quanta consideratione propriam cotidie debeant fragilitatem pensare. Sed et omelias euangelii numero XL composuit, quas in duobus codicibus aequa sorte distinxit.

Libros etiam Dialogorum IIII fecit, in quibus, rogatu Petri diaconi sui,

uirtutes sanctorum, quos in Italia clariores nosse uel audire poterat, ad exemplum uiuendi posteris collegit; ut, sicut in libris expositionum suarum, quibus sit uirtutibus insudandum, edocuit, ita etiam descriptis sanctorum miraculis, quae uirtutum earumdem sit claritas, ostenderet. Primam quoque et ultimam Ezechielis prophetae partem, quae uidebantur obscuriores, per omelias XX et duas, quantum lucis intus habeant, demonstrauit. Excepto libello responsionum, quem ad interrogationes sancti Augustini primi Anglorum gentis episcopi scripsit, ut et supra docuimus, totum ipsum libellum his inserentes historiis; libello quoque synodico, quem cum episcopis Italiae de necessariis ecclesiae causis utilissimum conposuit, et familiaribus ad quosdam litteris. Quod eo magis mirum est tot eum ac tanta condere uolumina potuisse, quod omni pene iuuentutis suae tempore, ut uerbis ipsius loquar, crebris uiscerum doloribus cruciabatur, horis momentisque omnibus fracta stomachi uirtute lassescebat, lentis quidem, sed tamen continuis febribus anhelabat.

Uerum inter haec, dum sollicitus pensaret, quia scriptura teste: ‘Omnis filius, qui recipitur, flagellatur’; quo malis praesentibus durius deprimebatur, eo de aeterna certius praesumptione respirabat.

Haec quidem de inmortalis eius sint dicta ingenio, quod nec tanto corporis potuit dolore restringui. Nam alii quidam pontifices construendis ornandisque auro uel argento ecclesiis operam dabant, hic autem totus erga animarum lucra uacabat.

Quicquid pecuniae habuerat, sedulus hoc dispergere ac dare pauperibus curabat, ut iustitia eius maneret in saeculum saeculi, et cornu eius exaltaretur in gloria; ita ut illud beati Iob ueraciter dicere posset: ‘Auris audiens beatificauit me, et oculus uidens testimonium reddebat mihi, quod liberassem pauperem uociferantem, et pupillum, cui non esset adiutor. Benedictio perituri super me ueniebat, et cor uiduae consolatus sum. Iustitia indutus sum, et uestiui me, sicut uestimento et diademate, iudicio meo. Oculus fui caeco, et pes claudo. Pater eram pauperum, et causam, quam nesciebam, diligentissime inuestigabam. Conterebam molas iniqui, et de dentibus illius auferebam praedam.’ Et paulo post: ‘Si negaui,’

inquit, ‘quod uolebant, pauperibus, et oculos uiduae exspectare feci. Si comedi bucellam meam solus, et non comedit pupillus ex ea.

Quia ab infantia mea creuit mecum miseratio, et de utero matris meae egressa est mecum.’

Ad cuius pietatis et iustitiae opus pertinet etiam hoc, quod nostram gentem per praedicatorum, quos huc direxit, de dentibus antiqui hostis eripiens aeternae libertatis fecit esse participem; cuius fidei et saluti congaudens, quamque digna laude commendans, ipse dicit in Expositione beati Iob: ‘Ecce lingua Britanniae, quae nil aliud nouerat quam barbarum frendere, iam dudum in diuinis laudibus Hebreum coepit alleluia resonare. Ecce quondam tumidus,

iam substratus sanctorum pedibus seruit oceanus, eiusque barbaros motus, quos terreni principes edomare ferro nequuerant, hos pro diuina formidine sacerdotum ora simplicibus uerbis ligant, et qui cateruas pugnantium infidelis nequaquam metueret, iam nunc fidelis humilium linguas timet. Quia enim perceptis caelestibus uerbis, clarescentibus quoque miraculis, uirtus ei diuinae cognitionis infunditur, eiusdem diuinitatis terrore refrenatur, ut praeue agere metuat, ac totis desideriis ad aeternitatis gratiam uenire concupiscat.’ Quibus uerbis beatus Gregorius hoc quoque declarat, quia sanctus Augustinus et socii eius non sola praedicatione uerborum, sed etiam caelestium ostensione signorum gentem Anglorum ad agnitionem ueritatis perducebant.

Fecit inter alia beatus papa Gregorius, ut in ecclesiis sanctorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli super corpora eorum missae celebrarentur.

Sed et in ipsa missarum celebratione tria uerba maximae perfectionis plena superadiecit: ‘Diesque nostros in tua pace disponas, atque ab aeterna damnatione nos eripi, et in electorum tuorum iubeas grege numerari.’

Rexit autem ecclesiam temporibus imperatorum Mauricii et Focatis. Secundo autem eiusdem Focatis anno transiens ex hac uita, migravit ad ueram, quae in caelis est, uitam. Sepultus uero est corpore in ecclesia beati Petri apostoli, ante secretarium, die quarto Iduum Martiarum, quandoque in ipso cum ceteris sanctae ecclesiae pastoribus resurrecturus in gloria, scriptumque in tumba ipsius epitaphium huiusmodi:

Suscipe, terra, tuo corpus de corpore sumtum, Reddere quod ualeas uiuificante Deo.

Spiritus astra petit, leti nil iura nocebunt, Cui uitae alterius mors magis ipsa uia est.

Pontificis summi hoc clauduntur membra sepulchro, Qui innumeris semper uiuit ubique bonis.

Esuriem dapibus superauit, frigora ueste, Atque animas monitis textit ab hoste sacris.

Implebatque actu, quicquid sermone docebat, Esset ut exemplum, mystica uerba loquens.

Ad Christum Anglos conuertit pietate magistra, Adquirens fidei agmina gente noua.

Hic labor, hoc studium, haec tibi cura, hoc pastor agebas, Ut Domino offerres plurima lucra gregis.

Hisque Dei consul factus laetare triumphis; Nam mercedem operum iam sine fine tenes.

Nec silentio praetereunda opinio, quae de beato Gregorio traditione maiorum ad nos usque perlata est; qua uidelicet ex causa admonitus tam sedulam erga salutem nostrae gentis curam gesserit. Dicunt, quia die quadam

cum, aduenientibus nuper mercatoribus, multa uenalia in forum fuissent conlata, multi ad emendum confluxissent, et ipsum Gregorium inter alios aduenisse, ac uidisse inter alia pueros uenales positos candidi corporis, ac uenusti uultus, capillorum quoque forma egregia. Quos cum aspiceret, interrogauit, ut aiunt, de qua regione uel terra essent adlati. Dictumque est, quia de Brittania insula, cuius incolae talis essent aspectus.

Rursus interrogauit, utrum idem insulani Christiani, an paganis adhuc erroribus essent implicati. Dictum est, quod essent pagani. At ille, intimo ex corde longa trahens suspiria: ‘Heu, pro dolor!’

inquit, ‘quod tam lucidi uultus homines tenebrarum auctor possidet, tantaque gratia frontispicii mentem ab interna gratia uacuam gestat!’ Rursus ergo interrogauit, quod esset uocabulum gentis illius. Responsum est, quod Angli uocarentur. At ille: ‘Bene,’

inquit; ‘nam et angelicam habent faciem, et tales angelorum in caelis decet esse coheredes. Quod habet nomen ipsa prouincia, de qua isti sunt adlati?’ Responsum est, quod Deiri uocarentur idem prouinciales. At ille: ‘Bene,’ inquit, ‘Deiri; de ira eruti, et ad misericordiam Christi uocati. Rex prouinciae illius quomodo appellatur?’ Responsum est, quod Aelli diceretur. At ille adludens ad nomen ait: ‘Alleluia, laudem Dei Creatoris illis in partibus oportet cantari.’

Accedensque ad pontificem Romanae et apostolicae sedis, nondum enim erat ipse pontifex factus, rogauit, ut genti Anglorum in Britanniam aliquos uerbi ministros, per quos ad Christum conuerteretur, mitteret; se ipsum paratum esse in hoc opus Domino cooperante perficiendum, si tamen apostolico papae, hoc ut fieret, placeret.

Quod dum perficere non posset, quia, etsi pontifex concedere illi, quod petierat, uoluit, non tamen ciues Romani, ut tam longe ab urbe secederet, potuere permittere; mox ut ipse pontificatus officio functus est, perfecit opus diu desideratum; alios quidem praedicationes mittens, sed ipse praedicationem ut fructificaret, suis exhortationibus ac precibus adiuuans.

Haec iuxta opinionem, quam ab antiquis accepimus, historiae nostrae ecclesiasticae inserere oportum duximus.

Chap. I.

Of the death of the blessed Pope Gregory. [604 a.d.]

At this time, that is, in the year of our Lord 605, the blessed Pope Gregory, after having most gloriously governed the Roman Apostolic see thirteen years, six months, and ten days, died, and was translated to an eternal abode in the kingdom of Heaven. Of whom, seeing that by his zeal he converted our nation, the English, from the power of Satan to the faith of Christ, it behoves us to discourse more at large in our Ecclesiastical History, for we may rightly,

nay, we must, call him our apostle; because, as soon as he began to wield the pontifical power over all the world, and was placed over the Churches long before converted to the true faith, he made our nation, till then enslaved to idols, the Church of Christ, so that concerning him we may use those words of the Apostle; "if he be not an apostle to others, yet doubtless he is to us; for the seal of his apostleship are we in the Lord."

He was by nation a Roman, son of Gordianus, tracing his descent from ancestors that were not only noble, but religious. Moreover Felix, once bishop of the same Apostolic see, a man of great honour in Christ and in the Church, was his forefather. Nor did he show his nobility in religion by less strength of devotion than his parents and kindred. But that nobility of this world which was seen in him, by the help of the Divine Grace, he used only to gain the glory of eternal dignity; for soon quitting his secular habit, he entered a monastery, wherein he began to live with so much grace of perfection that (as he was wont afterwards with tears to testify) his mind was above all transitory things; that he rose superior to all that is subject to change; that he used to think of nothing but what was heavenly; that, whilst detained by the body, he broke through the bonds of the flesh by contemplation; and that he even loved death, which is a penalty to almost all men, as the entrance into life, and the reward of his labours. This he used to say of himself, not to boast of his progress in virtue, but rather to bewail the falling off which he imagined he had sustained through his pastoral charge. Indeed, once in a private conversation with his deacon, Peter, after having enumerated the former virtues of his soul, he added sorrowfully, "But now, on account of the pastoral charge, it is entangled with the affairs of laymen, and, after so fair an appearance of inward peace, is defiled with the dust of earthly action. And having wasted itself on outward things, by turning aside to the affairs of many men, even when it desires the inward things, it returns to them undoubtedly impaired. I therefore consider what I endure, I consider what I have lost, and when I behold what I have thrown away, that which I bear appears the more grievous."

So spake the holy man constrained by his great humility. But it behoves us to believe that he lost nothing of his monastic perfection by reason of his pastoral charge, but rather that he gained greater profit through the labour of converting many, than by the former calm of his private life, and chiefly because, whilst holding the pontifical office, he set about organizing his house like a monastery. And when first drawn from the monastery, ordained to the ministry of the altar, and sent to Constantinople as representative of the Apostolic see, though he now took part in the secular affairs of the palace, yet he did not abandon the fixed course of his heavenly life; for some of the brethren of his monastery, who had followed him to the royal city in their brotherly love, he employed for the better observance of monastic rule, to the end that at all times, by their example, as he writes himself, he might be held

fast to the calm shore of prayer, as it were, with the cable of an anchor, whilst he should be tossed up and down by the ceaseless waves of worldly affairs; and daily in the intercourse of studious reading with them, strengthen his mind shaken with temporal concerns. By their company he was not only guarded against the assaults of the world, but more and more roused to the exercises of a heavenly life.

For they persuaded him to interpret by a mystical exposition the book of the blessed Job, which is involved in great obscurity; nor could he refuse to undertake that work, which brotherly affection imposed on him for the future benefit of many; but in a wonderful manner, in five and thirty books of exposition, he taught how that same book is to be understood literally; how to be referred to the mysteries of Christ and the Church; and in what sense it is to be adapted to every one of the faithful. This work he began as papal representative in the royal city, but finished it at Rome after being made pope. Whilst he was still in the royal city, by the help of the grace of Catholic truth, he crushed in its first rise a new heresy which sprang up there, concerning the state of our resurrection. For Eutychius, bishop of that city, taught, that our body, in the glory of resurrection, would be impalpable, and more subtile than wind and air. The blessed Gregory hearing this, proved by force of truth, and by the instance of the Resurrection of our Lord, that this doctrine was every way opposed to the orthodox faith. For the Catholic faith holds that our body, raised by the glory of immortality, is indeed rendered subtile by the effect of spiritual power, but is palpable by the reality of nature; according to the example of our Lord's Body, concerning which, when risen from the dead, He Himself says to His disciples, "Handle Me and see, for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see Me have." In maintaining this faith, the venerable Father Gregory so earnestly strove against the rising heresy, and with the help of the most pious emperor, Tiberius Constantine, so fully suppressed it, that none has been since found to revive it.

He likewise composed another notable book, the "*Liber Pastoralis*," wherein he clearly showed what sort of persons ought to be preferred to rule the Church; how such rulers ought to live; with how much discrimination they ought to instruct the different classes of their hearers, and how seriously to reflect every day on their own frailty. He also wrote forty homilies on the Gospel, which he divided equally into two volumes; and composed four books of Dialogues, in which, at the request of his deacon, Peter, he recounted the virtues of the more renowned saints of Italy, whom he had either known or heard of, as a pattern of life for posterity; to the end that, as he taught in his books of Expositions what virtues men ought to strive after, so by describing the miracles of saints, he might make known the glory of those virtues. Further, in twenty-two homilies, he showed how much light is latent in the first and last parts of the prophet Ezekiel, which seemed the most obscure. Besides which, he wrote the "*Book of Answers*," to the questions of the holy

Augustine, the first bishop of the English nation, as we have shown above, inserting the same book entire in this history; and the useful little "Synodical Book," which he composed with the bishops of Italy on necessary matters of the Church; as well as private letters to certain persons. And it is the more wonderful that he could write so many lengthy works, seeing that almost all the time of his youth, to use his own words, he was frequently tormented with internal pain, constantly enfeebled by the weakness of his digestion, and oppressed by a low but persistent fever. But in all these troubles, forasmuch as he carefully reflected that, as the Scripture testifies, "He scourgeth every son whom He receiveth," the more severely he suffered under those present evils, the more he assured himself of his eternal hope.

Thus much may be said of his immortal genius, which could not be crushed by such severe bodily pains. Other popes applied themselves to building churches or adorning them with gold and silver, but Gregory was wholly intent upon gaining souls. Whatsoever money he had, he took care to distribute diligently and give to the poor, that his righteousness might endure for ever, and his horn be exalted with honour; so that the words of the blessed Job might be truly said of him, "When the ear heard me, then it blessed me; and when the eye saw me, it gave witness to me: because I delivered the poor that cried, and the fatherless, and him that had none to help him. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me, and I caused the widow's heart to sing for joy. I put on righteousness, and it clothed me; my judgement was as a robe and a diadem. I was eyes to the blind, and feet was I to the lame. I was a father to the poor; and the cause which I knew not, I searched out. And I brake the jaws of the wicked, and plucked the spoil out of his teeth." And a little after: "If I have withheld," says he, "the poor from their desire; or have caused the eyes of the widow to fail; or have eaten my morsel myself alone, and the fatherless hath not eaten thereof: (for from my youth compassion grew up with me, and from my mother's womb it came forth with me.)"

To his works of piety and righteousness this also may be added, that he saved our nation, by the preachers he sent hither, from the teeth of the old enemy, and made it partaker of eternal liberty. Rejoicing in the faith and salvation of our race, and worthily commending it with praise, he says, in his exposition of the blessed Job, "Behold, the tongue of Britain, which only knew how to utter barbarous cries, has long since begun to raise the Hebrew Hallelujah to the praise of God! Behold, the once swelling ocean now serves prostrate at the feet of the saints; and its wild upheavals, which earthly princes could not subdue with the sword, are now, through the fear of God, bound by the lips of priests with words alone; and the heathen that stood not in awe of troops of warriors, now believes and fears the tongues of the humble! For he has received a message from on high and mighty works are revealed; the strength of the knowledge of God is given him, and restrained by the fear of the Lord, he dreads to do evil, and with all his heart desires to attain to

everlasting grace.” In which words the blessed Gregory shows us this also, that St. Augustine and his companions brought the English to receive the truth, not only by the preaching of words, but also by showing forth heavenly signs.

The blessed Pope Gregory, among other things, caused Masses to be celebrated in the churches of the holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, over their bodies. And in the celebration of Masses, he added three petitions of the utmost perfection: “And dispose our days in thy peace, and bid us to be preserved from eternal damnation, and to be numbered in the flock of thine elect.”

He governed the Church in the days of the Emperors Mauritius and Phocas, and passing out of this life in the second year of the same Phocas, he departed to the true life which is in Heaven. His body was buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter before the sacristy, on the 12th day of March, to rise one day in the same body in glory with the rest of the holy pastors of the Church. On his tomb was written this epitaph:

Receive, O Earth, his body taken from thine own; thou canst restore it, when God calls to life. His spirit rises to the stars; the claims of death shall not avail against him, for death itself is but the way to new life. In this tomb are laid the limbs of a great pontiff, who yet lives for ever in all places in countless deeds of mercy. Hunger and cold he overcame with food and raiment, and shielded souls from the enemy by his holy teaching. And whatsoever he taught in word, that he fulfilled in deed, that he might be a pattern, even as he spake words of mystic meaning. By his guiding love he brought the Angles to Christ, gaining armies for the Faith from a new people. This was thy toil, thy task, thy care, thy aim as shepherd, to offer to thy Lord abundant increase of the flock. So, Consul of God, rejoice in this thy triumph, for now thou hast the reward of thy works for evermore.

Nor must we pass by in silence the story of the blessed Gregory, handed down to us by the tradition of our ancestors, which explains his earnest care for the salvation of our nation. It is said that one day, when some merchants had lately arrived at Rome, many things were exposed for sale in the market place, and much people resorted thither to buy: Gregory himself went with the rest, and saw among other wares some boys put up for sale, of fair complexion, with pleasing countenances, and very beautiful hair. When he beheld them, he asked, it is said, from what region or country they were brought? and was told, from the island of Britain, and that the inhabitants were like that in appearance. He again inquired whether those islanders were Christians, or still involved in the errors of paganism, and was informed that they were pagans. Then fetching a deep sigh from the bottom of his heart, “Alas! what pity,” said he, “that the author of darkness should own men of such fair countenances; and that with such grace of outward form, their minds should be void of inward grace.” He therefore again asked, what was the

name of that nation? and was answered, that they were called Angles. “Right,” said he, “for they have an angelic face, and it is meet that such should be co-heirs with the Angels in heaven. What is the name of the province from which they are brought?” It was replied, that the natives of that province were called Deiri. “Truly are they *De ira*,” said he, “saved from wrath, and called to the mercy of Christ. How is the king of that province called?” They told him his name was Aelli; and he, playing upon the name, said, “Allelujah, the praise of God the Creator must be sung in those parts.”

Then he went to the bishop of the Roman Apostolic see (for he was not himself then made pope), and entreated him to send some ministers of the Word into Britain to the nation of the English, that it might be converted to Christ by them; declaring himself ready to carry out that work with the help of God, if the Apostolic Pope should think fit to have it done. But not being then able to perform this task, because, though the Pope was willing to grant his request, yet the citizens of Rome could not be brought to consent that he should depart so far from the city, as soon as he was himself made Pope, he carried out the long-desired work, sending, indeed, other preachers, but himself by his exhortations and prayers helping the preaching to bear fruit. This account, which we have received from a past generation, we have thought fit to insert in our Ecclesiastical History.

CHAP. 2

Interea Augustinus adiutorio usus Aedilbercti regis conuocauit ad suum colloquium episcopos siue doctores proximae Brettonum prouinciae in loco, qui usque hodie lingua Anglorum Augustinaes ac, id est robur Augustini, in confinio Huicciorum et Occidentalium Saxonum appellatur; coepitque eis fraterna admonitione suadere, ut pace catholica secum habita communem euangelizandi gentibus pro Domino laborem susciperent. Non enim paschae diem dominicum suo tempore, sed a XIII usque ad XX lunam obseruabant; quae computatio LXXXIII annorum circulo continetur. Sed et alia plurima unitati ecclesiasticae contraria faciebant. Qui cum longa disputatione habita, neque precibus, neque hortamentis, neque increpationibus Augustini ac sociorum eius adsensum praebere uoluissent, sed suas potius traditiones uniuersis, quae per orbem sibi in Christo concordant, ecclesiis praeferrent, sanctus pater Augustinus hunc laboriosi ac longi certaminis finem fecit, ut diceret: ‘Obsecremus Deum, qui habitare facit unanimes in domu Patris sui, ut ipse nobis insinuare caelestibus signis dignetur, quae sequenda traditio, quibus sit uiis ad ingressum regni illius properandum. Adducatur aliquis eger, et per cuius preces fuerit curatus, huius fides et operatio Deo deuota atque omnibus sequenda credatur.’ Quod cum aduersarii, inuiti licet, concederent, adlatus est quidam de genere Anglorum, oculorum luce priuatus; qui cum oblatus Brettonum sacerdotibus nil curationis uel sanationis horum ministerio perciperet, tandem Augustinus, iusta necessitate compulsus, flectit genua sua ad Patrem Domini nostri Iesu Christi, deprecans, ut uisum caeco, quem amiserat, restitueret, et per inluminationem unius hominis corporalem, in plurimorum corde fidelium spiritalis gratiam lucis accenderet. Nec mora, inluminatur caecus, ac uerus summae lucis praeco ab omnibus praedicatur Augustinus. Tum Brettones confitentur quidem intellexisse se ueram esse uiam iustitiae, quam praedicaret Augustinus; sed non se posse absque suorum consensu ac licentia priscis abdicare moribus. Unde postulabant, ut secundo synodus pluribus aduenientibus fieret.

Quod cum esset statutum, uenerunt, ut perhibent, VII Brettonum episcopi et plures uiri doctissimi, maxime de nobilissimo eorum monasterio, quod uocatur lingua Anglorum Bancornaburg, cui tempore illo Dinoot abbas praefuisse narratur, qui ad praefatum ituri concilium uenerunt primo ad quendam uirum sanctum ac prudentem, qui apud eos anachoreticam ducere uitam solebat, consulentes, an ad praedicationem Augustini suas deserere traditiones deberent. Qui respondebat: ‘Si homo Dei est, sequimini illum.’ Dixerunt: ‘Et unde hoc possumus probare?’ At ille: ‘Dominus,’ inquit, ‘ait: “Tollite iugum meum super uos, et discite a me, quia mitis sum et humilis corde.” Si ergo Augustinus ille mitis est et humilis corde, credibile est, quia iugum Christi et ipse portet, et uobis portandum offerat; sin autem inmitis ac superbus est, constat, quia non est de Deo, neque nobis eius sermo curandus.’

Qui rursus aiebant: ‘Et unde uel hoc dinoscere ualemus?’ ‘Procurate,’ inquit, ‘ut ipse prior cum suis ad locum synodi adueniat, et, si uobis adpropinquantibus adsurrexerit, scientes, quia famulus Christi est, obtemperanter illum audite; sin autem uos spreuerit, nec coram uobis adsurgere uoluerit, cum sitis numero plures, et ipse spernatur a uobis.’

Fecerunt, ut dixerat. Factumque est, ut uenientibus illis sederet Augustinus in sella. Quod illi uidentes mox in iram conuersi sunt, eumque notantes superbiae, cunctis, quae dicebat, contradicere laborabant. Dicebat autem eis quia ‘in multis quidem nostrae consuetudini, immo uniuersalis ecclesiae contraria geritis; et tamen si in tribus his mihi obtemperare uultis, ut pascha suo tempore celebretis; ut ministerium baptizandi, quo Deo renascimur, iuxta morem sanctae Romanae et apostolicae ecclesiae conpleatis; ut genti Anglorum una nobiscum uerbum Domini praedicetis; cetera, quae agitis, quamuis moribus nostris contraria, aequanimiter cuncta tolerabimus.’ At illi nil horum se facturos, neque illum pro archiepiscopo habituros esse respondebant; conferentes ad inuicem, quia ‘si modo nobis adsurgere noluit, quanto magis, si ei subdi coeperimus, iam nos pro nihilo contemnet.’

Quibus uir Domini Augustinus fertur minitans praedixisse, quia, si pacem cum fratribus accipere nollent, bellum ab hostibus forent accepturi; et, si nationi Anglorum noluissent uiam uitae praedicare, per horum manus ultionem essent mortis passuri. Quod ita per omnia, ut praedixerat, diuino agente iudicio patratum est.

Siquidem post haec ipse, de quo diximus, rex Anglorum fortissimus Aedilfrid collecto grandi exercitu ad ciuitatem Legionum, quae a gente Anglorum Legacaestir, a Brettonibus autem rectius Carlegion appellatur, maximam gentis perfidae stragem dedit. Cumque bellum acturus uideret sacerdotes eorum, qui ad exorandum Deum pro milite bellum agente conuenerant, seorsum in tutiore loco consistere, sciscitabatur, qui essent hi, quidue acturi illo conuenissent. Erant autem plurimi eorum de monasterio Bancor, in quo tantus fertur fuisse numerus monachorum, ut, cum in VII portiones esset cum praepositis sibi rectoribus monasterium diuisum, nulla harum portio minus quam CCCtos homines haberet, qui omnes de labore manuum suarum uiuere solebant. Horum ergo plurimi ad memoratam aciem, peracto ieiunio triduo, cum aliis orandi causa conuenerant, habentes defensorem nomine Brocmailum, qui eos intentos precibus a barbarorum gladiis protegeret. Quorum causam aduentus cum intellexisset rex Ædilfrid, ait: ‘Ergo si aduersum nos ad Deum suum clamant, profecto et ipsi, quamuis arma non ferant, contra nos pugnant, qui aduersis nos inprecationibus persequuntur.’ Itaque in hos primum arma uerti iubet, et sic ceteras nefandae militiae copias non sine magno exercitus sui damno deleuit. Exinctos in ea pugna ferunt de his, qui ad orandum uenerant, uiros circiter mille CCtos, et solum L fuga esse lapsos. Brocmail ad primum hostium aduentum cum suis terga uertens, eos, quos defendere debuerat, inermes ac nudos ferientibus

gladiis reliquit. Sicque completum est praesagium sancti pontificis Augustini, quamvis ipso iam multo ante tempore ad caelestia regna sublato, ut etiam temporalis interitus ultione sentirent perfidi, quod oblata sibi perpetuae salutis consilia spreuerant.

Chap. II.

How Augustine admonished the bishops of the Britons on behalf of Catholic peace, and to that end wrought a heavenly miracle in their presence; and of the vengeance that pursued them for their contempt.

[*Circ. 603 a.d.*]

In the meantime, Augustine, with the help of King Ethelbert, drew together to a conference the bishops and doctors of the nearest province of the Britons, at a place which is to this day called, in the English language, Augustine's Ác, that is, Augustine's Oak, on the borders of the Hwiccas and West Saxons; and began by brotherly admonitions to persuade them to preserve Catholic peace with him, and undertake the common labour of preaching the Gospel to the heathen for the Lord's sake. For they did not keep Easter Sunday at the proper time, but from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon; which computation is contained in a cycle of eighty-four years. Besides, they did many other things which were opposed to the unity of the church. When, after a long disputation, they did not comply with the entreaties, exhortations, or rebukes of Augustine and his companions, but preferred their own traditions before all the Churches which are united in Christ throughout the world, the holy father, Augustine, put an end to this troublesome and tedious contention, saying, "Let us entreat God, who maketh men to be of one mind in His Father's house, to vouchsafe, by signs from Heaven, to declare to us which tradition is to be followed; and by what path we are to strive to enter His kingdom. Let some sick man be brought, and let the faith and practice of him, by whose prayers he shall be healed, be looked upon as hallowed in God's sight and such as should be adopted by all." His adversaries unwillingly consenting, a blind man of the English race was brought, who having been presented to the British bishops, found no benefit or healing from their ministry; at length, Augustine, compelled by strict necessity, bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying that He would restore his lost sight to the blind man, and by the bodily enlightenment of one kindle the grace of spiritual light in the hearts of many of the faithful. Immediately the blind man received sight, and Augustine was proclaimed by all to be a true herald of the light from Heaven. The Britons then confessed that they perceived that it was the true way of righteousness which Augustine taught; but that they could not depart from their ancient customs without the consent and sanction of their people. They therefore desired that a second time a synod might be appointed, at which more of their number should be present.

This being decreed, there came, it is said, seven bishops of the Britons, and many men of great learning, particularly from their most celebrated monastery, which is called, in the English tongue, Bancornaburg, and over which the Abbot Dinoot is said to have presided at that time. They that were to go to the aforesaid council, betook themselves first to a certain holy and discreet man, who was wont to lead the life of a hermit among them, to consult with him, whether they ought, at the preaching of Augustine, to forsake their traditions. He answered, "If he is a man of God, follow him."—"How shall we know that?" said they. He replied, "Our Lord saith, Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart; if therefore, Augustine is meek and lowly of heart, it is to be believed that he bears the yoke of Christ himself, and offers it to you to bear. But, if he is harsh and proud, it is plain that he is not of God, nor are we to regard his words." They said again, "And how shall we discern even this?"—"Do you contrive," said the anchorite, "that he first arrive with his company at the place where the synod is to be held; and if at your approach he rises up to you, hear him submissively, being assured that he is the servant of Christ; but if he despises you, and does not rise up to you, whereas you are more in number, let him also be despised by you."

They did as he directed; and it happened, that as they approached, Augustine was sitting on a chair. When they perceived it, they were angry, and charging him with pride, set themselves to contradict all he said. He said to them, "Many things ye do which are contrary to our custom, or rather the custom of the universal Church, and yet, if you will comply with me in these three matters, to wit, to keep Easter at the due time; to fulfil the ministry of Baptism, by which we are born again to God, according to the custom of the holy Roman Apostolic Church; and to join with us in preaching the Word of God to the English nation, we will gladly suffer all the other things you do, though contrary to our customs." They answered that they would do none of those things, nor receive him as their archbishop; for they said among themselves, "if he would not rise up to us now, how much more will he despise us, as of no account, if we begin to be under his subjection?" Then the man of God, Augustine, is said to have threatened them, that if they would not accept peace with their brethren, they should have war from their enemies; and, if they would not preach the way of life to the English nation, they should suffer at their hands the vengeance of death. All which, through the dispensation of the Divine judgement, fell out exactly as he had predicted.

For afterwards the warlike king of the English, Ethelfrid, of whom we have spoken, having raised a mighty army, made a very great slaughter of that heretical nation, at the city of Legions, which by the English is called Legacaestir, but by the Britons more rightly Carlegion. Being about to give battle, he observed their priests, who were come together to offer up their prayers to God for the combatants, standing apart in a place of greater safety;

he inquired who they were, and what they came together to do in that place. Most of them were of the monastery of Bangor, in which, it is said, there was so great a number of monks, that the monastery being divided into seven parts, with a superior set over each, none of those parts contained less than three hundred men, who all lived by the labour of their hands. Many of these, having observed a fast of three days, had come together along with others to pray at the aforesaid battle, having one Brocmail for their protector, to defend them, whilst they were intent upon their prayers, against the swords of the barbarians. King Ethelfrid being informed of the occasion of their coming, said, "If then they cry to their God against us, in truth, though they do not bear arms, yet they fight against us, because they assail us with their curses." He, therefore, commanded them to be attacked first, and then destroyed the rest of the impious army, not without great loss of his own forces. About twelve hundred of those that came to pray are said to have been killed, and only fifty to have escaped by flight. Brocmail, turning his back with his men, at the first approach of the enemy, left those whom he ought to have defended unarmed and exposed to the swords of the assailants. Thus was fulfilled the prophecy of the holy Bishop Augustine, though he himself had been long before taken up into the heavenly kingdom, that the heretics should feel the vengeance of temporal death also, because they had despised the offer of eternal salvation.

CHAP. 3

Anno dominicae incarnationis DCIII^{mo}, Augustinus Britanniarum archiepiscopus ordinavit duos episcopos, Mellitum uidelicet et Iustum; Mellitum quidem ad praedicandum prouinciae Orientalium Saxonum, qui Tamense fluuio dirimuntur a Cantia, et ipsi orientali mari contigui, quorum metropolis Lundonia ciuitas est, super ripam praefati fluminis posita, et ipsa multorum emporium populorum terra marique uenientium; in qua uidelicet gente tunc temporis Saberct nepos Aedilbercti ex sorore Ricula regnabat, quamuis sub potestate positus eiusdem Aedilbercti, qui omnibus, ut supra dictum est, usque ad terminum Humbrae fluminis Anglorum gentibus imperabat.

Ubi uero et haec prouincia uerbum ueritatis praedicante Mellito accepit, fecit rex Aedilberct in ciuitate Lundonia ecclesiam sancti Pauli apostoli, in qua locum sedis episcopalis, et ipse, et successores eius haberent. Iustum uero in ipsa Cantia Augustinus episcopum ordinavit in ciuitate Dorubreui, quam gens Anglorum a primario quondam illius, qui dicebatur Hrof, Hrofascastra cognominat.

Distat autem a Doruuerni milibus passuum ferme XXIII ad occidentem, in qua rex Aedilberct ecclesiam beati Andreae apostoli fecit, qui etiam episcopis utriusque huius ecclesiae dona multa, sicut et Doruuernensis, obtulit; sed et territoria ac possessiones in usum eorum, qui erant cum episcopis, adiecit.

Defunctus est autem Deo dilectus pater Augustinus, et positum corpus eius foras iuxta ecclesiam beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, cuius supra meminimus, quia necdum fuerat perfecta nec dedicata. Mox uero ut dedicata est, intro inlatum, et in porticu illius aquilonali decenter sepultum est; in qua etiam sequentium archiepiscoporum omnium sunt corpora tumulata praeter duorum tantummodo, id est Theodori et Berctualdi, quorum corpora in ipsa ecclesia posita sunt, eo quod praedicta porticus plura capere nequiuit. Habet haec in medio pene sui altare in honore beati papae Gregorii dedicatum, in quo per omne sabbatum a presbytero loci illius agenda eorum sollemniter celebrantur. Scriptum uero est in tumba eiusdem Augustini epitaphium huiusmodi: 'Hic requiescit domnus Augustinus Doruuernensis archiepiscopus primus, qui olim huc a beato Gregorio Romanae urbis pontifice directus, et a Deo operatione miraculorum suffultus, Aedilbertum regem ac gentem illius ab idolorum cultu ad Christi fidem perduxit, et conpletis in pace diebus officii sui, defunctus est VII Kalendas Iunias, eodem rege regnante.'

Chap. III.

How St. Augustine made Mellitus and Justus bishops; and of his death.

In the year of our Lord 604, Augustine, Archbishop of Britain, ordained two bishops, to wit, Mellitus and Justus; Mellitus to preach to the province of the East-Saxons, who are divided from Kent by the river Thames, and border on the Eastern sea. Their metropolis is the city of London, which is situated on the bank of the aforesaid river, and is the mart of many nations resorting to it by sea and land. At that time, Sabert, nephew to Ethelbert through his sister Ricula, reigned over the nation, though he was under subjection to Ethelbert, who, as has been said above, had command over all the nations of the English as far as the river Humber. But when this province also received the word of truth, by the preaching of Mellitus, King Ethelbert built the church of St. Paul the Apostle, in the city of London, where he and his successors should have their episcopal see. As for Justus, Augustine ordained him bishop in Kent, at the city of Dorubrevis, which the English call Hrofaescaestrae, from one that was formerly the chief man of it, called Hrof. It is about twenty-four miles distant from the city of Canterbury to the westward, and in it King Ethelbert dedicated a church to the blessed Apostle Andrew, and bestowed many gifts on the bishops of both those churches, as well as on the Bishop of Canterbury, adding lands and possessions for the use of those who were associated with the bishops.

After this, the beloved of God, our father Augustine, died, and his body was laid outside, close by the church of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, above spoken of, because it was not yet finished, nor consecrated, but as soon as it was consecrated, the body was brought in, and fittingly buried in the north chapel thereof; wherein also were interred the bodies of all the succeeding archbishops, except two only, Theodore and Bertwald, whose bodies are in the church itself, because the aforesaid chapel could contain no more. Almost in the midst of this chapel is an altar dedicated in honour of the blessed Pope Gregory, at which every Saturday memorial Masses are celebrated for the archbishops by a priest of that place. On the tomb of Augustine is inscribed this epitaph:

“Here rests the Lord Augustine, first Archbishop of Canterbury, who, being of old sent hither by the blessed Gregory, Bishop of the city of Rome, and supported by God in the working of miracles, led King Ethelbert and his nation from the worship of idols to the faith of Christ, and having ended the days of his office in peace, died the 26th day of May, in the reign of the same king.”

CHAP. 4

Successit Augustino in episcopatum Laurentius, quem ipse idcirco adhuc uiuens ordinauerat, ne, se defuncto, status ecclesiae tam rudis uel ad horam pastore destitutus uacillare inciperet. In quo et exemplum sequebatur primi pastoris ecclesiae, hoc est beatissimi apostolorum principis Petri, qui, fundata Romae ecclesia Christi, Clementem sibi adiutorem euangelizandi, simul et successorem consecrasset perhibetur. Laurentius archiepiscopi gradu potitus strenuissime fundamenta ecclesiae, quae nobiliter iacta uidit, augmentare, atque ad profectum debiti culminis, et crebra uoce sanctae exhortationis, et continuis piaae operationis exemplis prouehere curauit. Denique non solum nouae, quae de Anglis erat collecta, ecclesiae curam gerebat, sed et ueterum Britanniae incolarum, nec non et Scottorum, qui Hiberniam insulam Britanniae proximam incolunt, populis pastorem impendere sollicitudinem curabat. Siquidem ubi Scottorum in praefata ipsorum patria, quomodo et Bretonum in ipsa Britannia, uitam ac professionem minus ecclesiasticam in multis esse cognouit, maxime quod paschae sollemnitatem non suo tempore celebrarent, sed, ut supra docuimus, a XIIIa luna usque ad XXam dominicae resurrectionis diem obseruandum esse putarent; scripsit cum coepiscopis suis exhortatoriam ad eos epistolam, obsecrans eos et contestans unitatem pacis et catholicae obseruationis cum ea, quae toto orbe diffusa est, ecclesia Christi tenere; cuius uidelicet epistulae principium hoc est:

Dominis carissimis fratribus episcopis uel abbatibus per uniuersam Scottiam Laurentius, Mellitus, et Iustus episcopi, serui seruorum Dei.

Dum nos sedes apostolica more suo, sicut in uniuerso orbe terrarum, in his occidujs partibus ad praedicandum gentibus paganis dirigeret, atque in hanc insulam, quae Britannia nuncupatur, contigit introisse; antequam cognosceremus, credentes, quod iuxta morem uniuersalis ecclesiae ingrederentur, in magna reuerentia sanctitatis tam Bretones quam Scottos uenerati sumus; sed cognoscentes Bretones, Scottos meliores putauimus. Scottos uero per Daganum episcopum in hanc, quam superius memorauimus, insulam, et Columbanum abbatem in Gallis uenientem nihil discrepare a Bretonibus in eorum conuersatione didicimus. Nam Daganus episcopus ad nos ueniens, non solum cibum nobiscum, sed nec in eodem hospitio, quo uescbamur, sumere uoluit.

Misit idem Laurentius cum coepiscopis suis etiam Bretonum sacerdotibus litteras suo gradui condignas, quibus eos in unitate catholica confirmare satagit. Sed quantum haec agendo profecerit, adhuc praesentia tempora declarant.

His temporibus uenit Mellitus Lundoniae episcopus Romam, de necessariis ecclesiae Anglorum cum apostolico papa Bonifatio tractaturus. Et cum idem papa reuerentissimus cogere synodum episcoporum Italiae, de uita

monachorum et quiete ordinaturus, et ipse Mellitus inter eos adsedit anno VIII imperii Focatis principis, indictione XIIIa, tertio die Kalendarum Martiarum;

ut quaeque erant regulariter decreta, sua quoque auctoritate subscribens confirmaret, ac Britanniam rediens secum Anglorum ecclesiis mandanda atque observanda deferret, una cum epistulis, quas idem pontifex Deo dilecto archiepiscopo Laurentio et clero uniuerso, similiter et Aedilbercto regi atque genti Anglorum direxit. Hic est Bonifatius, quartus a beato Gregorio Romanae urbis episcopo, qui inpetrauit a Focate principe donari ecclesiae Christi templum Romae, quod Pantheon uocabatur ab antiquis, quasi simulacrum esset omnium deorum; in quo ipse, eliminata omni spurcitia, fecit ecclesiam sanctae Dei genetricis atque omnium martyrum Christi;

ut, exclusa multitudo daemonum, multitudo ibi sanctorum memoriam haberet.

Chap. IV.

How Laurentius and his bishops admonished the Scots to observe the unity of the Holy Church, particularly in keeping of Easter; and how Mellitus went to Rome.

Laurentius succeeded Augustine in the bishopric, having been ordained thereto by the latter, in his lifetime, lest, upon his death, the Church, as yet in so unsettled a state, might begin to falter, if it should be destitute of a pastor, though but for one hour. Wherein he also followed the example of the first pastor of the Church, that is, of the most blessed Peter, chief of the Apostles, who, having founded the Church of Christ at Rome, is said to have consecrated Clement to help him in preaching the Gospel, and at the same time to be his successor. Laurentius, being advanced to the rank of archbishop, laboured indefatigably, both by frequent words of holy exhortation and constant example of good works to strengthen the foundations of the Church, which had been so nobly laid, and to carry it on to the fitting height of perfection. In short, he not only took charge of the new Church formed among the English, but endeavoured also to bestow his pastoral care upon the tribes of the ancient inhabitants of Britain, as also of the Scots, who inhabit the island of Ireland, which is next to Britain. For when he understood that the life and profession of the Scots in their aforesaid country, as well as of the Britons in Britain, was not truly in accordance with the practice of the Church in many matters, especially that they did not celebrate the festival of Easter at the due time, but thought that the day of the Resurrection of our Lord ought, as has been said above, to be observed between the 14th and 20th of the moon; he wrote, jointly with his fellow bishops, a hortatory epistle, entreating and conjuring them to keep the unity of peace and Catholic observance with the Church of Christ spread throughout the world. The beginning of which epistle is as follows:

“To our most dear brethren, the Lords Bishops and Abbots throughout all the country of the Scots, Laurentius, Mellitus, and Justus, Bishops, servants of the servants of God. When the Apostolic see, according to the universal custom which it has followed elsewhere, sent us to these western parts to preach to pagan nations, and it was our lot to come into this island, which is called Britain, before we knew them, we held both the Britons and Scots in great esteem for sanctity, believing that they walked according to the custom of the universal Church; but becoming acquainted with the Britons, we thought that the Scots had been better. Now we have learnt from Bishop Dagan, who came into this aforesaid island, and the Abbot Columban, in Gaul, that the Scots in no way differ from the Britons in their walk; for when Bishop Dagan came to us, not only did he refuse to eat at the same table, but even to eat in the same house where we were entertained.”

Also Laurentius with his fellow bishops wrote a letter to the bishops of the Britons, suitable to his degree, by which he endeavoured to confirm them in Catholic unity; but what he gained by so doing the present times still show.

About this time, Mellitus, bishop of London, went to Rome, to confer with the Apostolic Pope Boniface about the necessary affairs of the English Church. And the same most reverend pope, assembling a synod of the bishops of Italy, to prescribe rules for the life and peace of the monks, Mellitus also sat among them, in the eighth year of the reign of the Emperor Phocas, the thirteenth indiction, on the 27th of February, to the end that he also might sign and confirm by his authority whatsoever should be regularly decreed, and on his return into Britain might carry the decrees to the Churches of the English, to be committed to them and observed; together with letters which the same pope sent to the beloved of God, Archbishop Laurentius, and to all the clergy; as likewise to King Ethelbert and the English nation. This pope was Boniface, the fourth after the blessed Gregory, bishop of the city of Rome. He obtained for the Church of Christ from the Emperor Phocas the gift of the temple at Rome called by the ancients Pantheon, as representing all the gods; wherein he, having purified it from all defilement, dedicated a church to the holy Mother of God, and to all Christ's martyrs, to the end that, the company of devils being expelled, the blessed company of the saints might have therein a perpetual memorial.

CHAP. 5

Anno ab incarnatione dominica DCXVI, qui est annus XXI, ex quo Augustinus cum sociis ad praedicandum genti Anglorum missus est, Aedilberct rex Cantuariorum post regnum temporale, quod L et VI annis gloriosissime tenuerat, aeterna caelestis regni gaudia subiit;

qui tertius quidem in regibus gentis Anglorum cunctis australibus eorum prouinciis, quae Humbrae fluuio et contiguis ei terminis sequestrantur a borealibus, imperauit; sed primus omnium caeli regna conscendit. Nam primus imperium huiusmodi Aelli rex Australium Saxonum;

secundus Caelin rex Occidentalium Saxonum, qui lingua ipsorum Ceaulin uocabatur; tertius, ut diximus, Aedilberct rex Cantuariorum; quartus Reduald rex Orientalium Anglorum, qui etiam uiuente Aedilbercto eidem suae genti ducatum praebebat, obtinuit;

quintus Aeduini rex Nordanhymbrorum gentis, id est eius, quae ad Borealem Humbrae fluminis plagam inhabitat, maiore potentia cunctis, qui Britanniam incolunt, Anglorum pariter et Brettonum populis praefuit, praeter Cantuariis tantum; nec non et Meuanias Brettonum insulas, quae inter Hiberniam et Britanniam sitae sunt, Anglorum subiecit imperio; sextus Osuald et ipse Nordanhymbrorum rex Christianissimus, hisdem finibus regnum tenuit; septimus Osuiu frater eius, aequalibus pene terminis regnum nonnullo tempore coercens, Pictorum quoque atque Scottorum gentes, quae septentrionales Britanniae fines tenent, maxima ex parte perdomuit, ac tributarias fecit. Sed haec postmodum.

Defunctus uero est rex Aedilberct die XXIII mensis Februarii post XX et unum annos acceptae fidei, atque in porticu sancti Martini intro ecclesiam beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli sepultus, ubi et Berctaregina condita est.

Qui inter cetera bona, quae genti suae consulendo conferebat, etiam decreta illi iudiciorum, iuxta exempla Romanorum, cum consilio sapientium constituit; quae conscripta Anglorum sermone hactenus habentur, et obseruantur ab ea. In quibus primitus posuit, qualiter id emendare deberet, qui aliquid rerum uel ecclesiae, uel episcopi, uel reliquorum ordinum furto auferret;

uolens scilicet tuitionem eis, quos et quorum doctrinam susceperat, praestare.

Erat autem idem Aedilberct filius Irminrici, cuius pater Octa, cuius pater Oeric cognomento Oisc, a quo reges Cantuariorum solent Oiscingas cognominare. Cuius pater Hengist, qui cum filio suo Oisc inuitatus a Uurtigerno Britanniam primus intrauit, ut supra retulimus.

At uero post mortem Aedilbercti, cum filius eius Eadbald regni

gubernacula suscepisset, magno tenellis ibi adhuc ecclesiae clementis detrimento fuit. Siquidem non solum fidem Christi recipere noluerat, sed et fornicatione pollutus est tali, qualem nec inter gentes auditam apostolus testatur, ita ut uxorem patris haberet. Quo utroque scelere occasionem dedit ad priorem uomitum reuertendi his, qui sub imperio sui parentis, uel fauore uel timore regio, fidei et castimoniae iura susceperant. Nec supernae flagella distractionis perfido regi castigando et corrigendo defuere; nam crebra mentis uesania, et spiritus inmundi inuasionem premebatur.

Auxit autem procellam huiusce perturbationis etiam mors Sabercti regis Orientalium Saxonum, qui ubi regna perennia petens tres suos filios, qui pagani perdurauerant, regni temporalis heredes reliquit, coeperunt illi mox idolatriae, quam, uiuente eo, aliquantulum intermisisse uidebantur, palam seruire, subiectisque populis idola colendi liberam dare licentiam. Cumque uiderent pontificem, celebratis in ecclesia missarum sollemnibus, eucharistiam populo dare, dicebant, ut uulgo fertur, ad eum barbara inflati stultitia: ‘Quare non et nobis porrigis panem nitidum, quem et patri nostro Saba,’ sic namque eum appellare consuerant, ‘dabas, et populo adhuc dare in ecclesia non desistis?’ Quibus ille respondebat: ‘Si uultis ablui fonte illo salutari, quo pater uester ablutus est, potestis etiam panis sancti, cui ille participabat, esse participes; sin autem lauacrum uitae contemnitis, nullatenus ualetis panem uitae percipere.’ At illi: ‘Nolumus,’ inquit, ‘fontem illum intrare, quia nec opus illo nos habere nouimus, sed tamen pane illo refici uolumus.’ Cumque diligenter ac saepe ab illo essent admoniti nequaquam ita fieri posse, ut absque purgatione sacrosancta quis oblationi sacrosanctae communicaret, ad ultimum furore commoti aiebant: ‘Si non uis adsentire nobis in tam facili causa, quam petimus, non poteris iam in nostra prouincia demorari.’ Et expulerunt eum, ac de suo regno cum suis abire iusserunt.

Qui expulsus inde uenit Cantiam, tractaturus cum Laurentio et Iusto coepiscopis, quid in his esset agendum. Decretumque est communi consilio, quia satius esset, ut omnes patriam redeuntes, libera ibi mente Domino deseruirent, quam inter rebelles fidei barbaros sine fructu residerent.

Discessere itaque primo Mellitus et Iustus, atque ad partes Galliae secessere, ibi rerum finem expectare disponentes. Sed non multo tempore reges, qui praeconem a se ueritatis expulerant, daemonicis cultibus inpune seruiebant. Nam egressi contra gentem Geuissorum in proelium, omnes pariter cum sua militia corruerunt; nec, licet auctoribus perditis, excitatum ad scelera uulgus potuit re corrigi, atque ad simplicitatem fidei et caritatis, quae est in Christo, reuocari.

Chap. V.

How, after the death of the kings Ethelbert and Sabert, their successors restored idolatry; for which reason, both Mellitus and Justus departed

In the year of our Lord 616, which is the twenty-first year after Augustine and his company were sent to preach to the English nation, Ethelbert, king of Kent, having most gloriously governed his temporal kingdom fifty-six years, entered into the eternal joys of the kingdom of Heaven. He was the third of the English kings who ruled over all the southern provinces that are divided from the northern by the river Humber and the borders contiguous to it; but the first of all that ascended to the heavenly kingdom. The first who had the like sovereignty was Aelli, king of the South-Saxons; the second, Caelin, king of the West-Saxons, who, in their own language, is called Ceaulin; the third, as has been said, was Ethelbert, king of Kent; the fourth was Redwald, king of the East-Angles, who, even in the life-time of Ethelbert, had been acquiring the leadership for his own race. The fifth was Edwin, king of the Northumbrian nation, that is, of those who live in the district to the north of the river Humber; his power was greater; he had the overlordship over all the nations who inhabit Britain, both English and British, except only the people of Kent; and he reduced also under the dominion of the English, the Mevanian Islands of the Britons, lying between Ireland and Britain; the sixth was Oswald, the most Christian king of the Northumbrians, whose kingdom was within the same bounds; the seventh, his brother Oswy, ruled over a kingdom of like extent for a time, and for the most part subdued and made tributary the nations of the Picts and Scots, who occupy the northern parts of Britain: but of that hereafter.

King Ethelbert died on the 24th day of the month of February, twenty-one years after he had received the faith, and was buried in St. Martin's chapel within the church of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, where also lies his queen, Bertha. Among other benefits which he conferred upon his nation in his care for them, he established, with the help of his council of wise men, judicial decisions, after the Roman model; which are written in the language of the English, and are still kept and observed by them. Among which, he set down first what satisfaction should be given by any one who should steal anything belonging to the Church, the bishop, or the other clergy, for he was resolved to give protection to those whom he had received along with their doctrine.

This Ethelbert was the son of Irminric, whose father was Octa, whose father was Oeric, surnamed Oisc, from whom the kings of Kent are wont to be called Oiscings. His father was Hengist, who, being invited by Vortigern, first came into Britain, with his son Oisc, as has been said above.

But after the death of Ethelbert, the accession of his son Eadbald proved very harmful to the still tender growth of the new Church; for he not only refused to accept the faith of Christ, but was also defiled with such fornication, as the Apostle testifies, as is not so much as named among the

Gentiles, that one should have his father's wife. By both which crimes he gave occasion to those to return to their former uncleanness, who, under his father, had, either for favour or fear of the king, submitted to the laws of the faith and of a pure life. Nor did the unbelieving king escape without the scourge of Divine severity in chastisement and correction; for he was troubled with frequent fits of madness, and possessed by an unclean spirit. The storm of this disturbance was increased by the death of Sabert, king of the East Saxons, who departing to the heavenly kingdom, left three sons, still pagans, to inherit his temporal crown. They immediately began openly to give themselves up to idolatry, which, during their father's lifetime, they had seemed somewhat to abandon, and they granted free licence to their subjects to serve idols. And when they saw the bishop, whilst celebrating Mass in the church, give the Eucharist to the people, filled, as they were, with folly and ignorance, they said to him, as is commonly reported, "Why do you not give us also that white bread, which you used to give to our father Saba (for so they were wont to call him), and which you still continue to give to the people in the church?" To whom he answered, "If you will be washed in that font of salvation, in which your father was washed, you may also partake of the holy Bread of which he partook; but if you despise the laver of life, you can in no wise receive the Bread of life." They replied, "We will not enter into that font, because we know that we do not stand in need of it, and yet we will be refreshed by that bread." And being often earnestly admonished by him, that this could by no means be done, nor would any one be admitted to partake of the sacred Oblation without the holy cleansing, at last, they said, filled with rage, "If you will not comply with us in so small a matter as that which we require, you shall not stay in our province." And they drove him out and bade him and his company depart from their kingdom. Being driven thence, he came into Kent, to take counsel with his fellow bishops, Laurentius and Justus, and learn what was to be done in that case; and with one consent they determined that it was better for them all to return to their own country, where they might serve God in freedom of mind, than to continue to no purpose among barbarians, who had revolted from the faith. Mellitus and Justus accordingly went away first, and withdrew into the parts of Gaul, intending there to await the event. But the kings, who had driven from them the herald of the truth, did not continue long unpunished in their worship of devils. For marching out to battle against the nation of the Gewissi, they were all slain with their army. Nevertheless, the people, having been once turned to wickedness, though the authors of it were destroyed, would not be corrected, nor return to the unity of faith and charity which is in Christ.

CHAP. 6

Cum uero et Laurentius Mellitum Iustumque secuturus ac Britanniam esset relicturus, iussit ipsa sibi nocte in ecclesia beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, de qua frequenter iam diximus, stratum parari; in quo, cum post multas preces ac lacrimas ad Dominum pro statu ecclesiae fusas ad quiescendum membra posuisset, atque obdormisset, apparuit ei beatissimus apostolorum princeps, et multo illum tempore secretae noctis flagellis artioribus afficiens sciscitabatur apostolica districtione, quare gregem, quem sibi ipse crediderat, relinqueret, uel cui pastorum oues Christi in medio luporum positas fugiens ipse dimitteret.' 'An mei,'

inquit, 'oblitus es exempli, qui pro paruulis Christi, quos mihi in indicium suae dilectionis commendauerat, uincula, uerbera, carceres, afflictiones, ipsam postremo mortem, mortem autem crucis, ab infidelibus et inimicis Christi ipse cum Christo coronandus pertuli?' His beati Petri flagellis simul ex exhortationibus animatus famulus Christi Laurentius mox mane facto uenit ad regem, et, relecto uestimento, quantis esset uerberibus laceratus, ostendit. Qui multum miratus et inquirens, quis tanto uiro tales ausus esset plagas infligere; ut audiuit, quia suae causa salutis episcopus ab apostolo Christi tanta esset tormenta plagasque perpessus, extimuit multum; atque anathematizato omni idolatriae cultu, abdicato conubio non legitimo, suscepit fidem Christi, et baptizatus ecclesiae rebus, quantum ualuit, in omnibus consulere ac fauere curauit.

Misit etiam Galliam, et reuocauit Mellitum ac Iustum, eosque ad suas ecclesias libere instituendas redire praecepit; qui post annum, ex quo abierunt, reuersi sunt; et Iustus quidem ad ciuitatem Hrofi, cui praefuerat, rediit; Mellitum uero Lundonienses episcopum recipere noluerunt, idolatris magis pontificibus seruire gaudentes. Non enim tanta erat ei, quanta patri ipsius regni potestas, ut etiam nolentibus ac contradicentibus paganis antistitem suae posset ecclesiae reddere. Uerumtamen ipse cum sua gente, ex quo ad Dominum conuersus est, diuinis se studuit mancipare praeceptis. Denique et in monasterio beatissimi apostolorum principis ecclesiam sanctae Dei genetricis fecit, quam consecrauit archiepiscopus Mellitus.

Chap. VI.

How Laurentius, being reproved by the Apostle Peter, converted King Eadbald to Christ; and how the king soon recalled Mellitus and Justus to preach the Word. [617-618 a.d.]

Laurentius, being about to follow Mellitus and Justus, and to quit Britain, ordered his bed to be laid that night in the church of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, which has been often mentioned before; wherein having laid

himself to rest, after he had with tears poured forth many prayers to God for the state of the Church, he fell asleep; in the dead of night, the blessed chief of the Apostles appeared to him, and scourging him grievously a long time, asked of him with apostolic severity, why he was forsaking the flock which he had committed to him? or to what shepherd he was leaving, by his flight, Christ's sheep that were in the midst of wolves? "Hast thou," he said, "forgotten my example, who, for the sake of those little ones, whom Christ commended to me in token of His affection, underwent at the hands of infidels and enemies of Christ, bonds, stripes, imprisonment, afflictions, and lastly, death itself, even the death of the cross, that I might at last be crowned with Him?" Laurentius, the servant of Christ, roused by the scourging of the blessed Peter and his words of exhortation, went to the king as soon as morning broke, and laying aside his garment, showed the scars of the stripes which he had received. The king, astonished, asked who had presumed to inflict such stripes on so great a man. And when he heard that for the sake of his salvation the bishop had suffered these cruel blows at the hands of the Apostle of Christ, he was greatly afraid; and abjuring the worship of idols, and renouncing his unlawful marriage, he received the faith of Christ, and being baptized, promoted and supported the interests of the Church to the utmost of his power.

He also sent over into Gaul, and recalled Mellitus and Justus, and bade them return to govern their churches in freedom. They came back one year after their departure, and Justus returned to the city of Rochester, where he had before presided; but the people of London would not receive Bishop Mellitus, choosing rather to be under their idolatrous high priests; for King Eadbald had not so much authority in the kingdom as his father, and was not able to restore the bishop to his church against the will and consent of the pagans. But he and his nation, after his conversion to the Lord, sought to obey the commandments of God. Lastly, he built the church of the holy Mother of God, in the monastery of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, which was afterwards consecrated by Archbishop Mellitus.

CHAP. 7

Hoc enim regnante rege beatus archiepiscopus Laurentius regnum caeleste conscendit, atque in ecclesia et monasterio sancti apostoli Petri iuxta prodecessorem suum Augustinum sepultus est die quarto Nonarum Februariarum; post quem Mellitus, qui erat Lundoniae episcopus, sedem Doruuernensis ecclesiae tertius ab Augustino suscepit. Iustus autem adhuc superstes Hrofensem regebat ecclesiam. Qui, cum magna ecclesiam Anglorum cura ac labore gubernarent, susceperunt scripta exhortatoria a pontifice Romanae et apostolicae sedis Bonifatio, qui post Deusdedit ecclesiae praefuit, anno incarnationis dominicae DCXVIII. Erat autem Mellitus corporis quidem infirmitate, id est podagra, grauatus, sed mentis gressibus sanis alacriter terrena quaeque transiliens, atque ad caelestia semper amanda, petenda, et quaerenda peruolans. Erat carnis origine nobilis, sed culmine mentis nobilior.

Denique, ut unum uirtutis eius, unde cetera intellegi possint, testimonium referam, tempore quodam ciuitas Doruuernensis per culpam incuriae igni correpta crebrescentibus coepit flammis consumi;

quibus cum nullo aquarum iniectu posset aliquis obsistere, iamque ciuitatis esset pars uastata non minima, atque ad episcopium furens se flamma dilataret, confidens episcopus in diuinum, ubi humanum deerat, auxilium, iussit se obuiam saeuientibus et huc illucque uolantibus ignium globis efferri. Erat autem eo loci, ubi flammarum impetus maxime incumbebat, martyrium beatorum IIII Coronatorum. Ibi ergo perlatus obsequentum manibus episcopus coepit orando periculum infirmus abigere, quod firma fortium manus multum laborando nequiuera. Nec mora, uentus, qui a meridie flans urbi incendia sparserat, contra meridiem reflexus, primo uim sui furoris a lesione locorum, quae contra erant, abstraxit, ac mox funditus quiescendo, flammis pariter sopitis atque extinctis, conpescuit. Et quia uir Dei igne diuinae caritatis fortiter ardebat, quia tempestates potestatum aeriarum a sua suorumque lesione crebris orationibus uel exhortationibus repellere consuerat, merito uentis flammisque mundialibus praeualere, et, ne sibi suisque nocerent, obtinere poterat.

Et hic ergo postquam annis quinque rexit ecclesiam, Aeodbaldo regnante migravit ad caelos, sepultusque est cum patribus suis in saepe dicto monasterio et ecclesia beatissimi apostolorum principis, anno ab incarnatione Domini DCXXIII, die VIII Kalendarum Maiarum.

Chap. VII.

How Bishop Mellitus by prayer quenched a fire in his city. [619 a.d.]

In this king's reign, the blessed Archbishop Laurentius was taken up to the heavenly kingdom: he was buried in the church and monastery of the holy

Apostle Peter, close by his predecessor Augustine, on the 2nd day of the month of February. Mellitus, who was bishop of London, succeeded to the see of Canterbury, being the third archbishop from Augustine; Justus, who was still living, governed the church of Rochester. These ruled the Church of the English with much care and industry, and received letters of exhortation from Boniface, bishop of the Roman Apostolic see, who presided over the Church after Deusdedit, in the year of our Lord 619. Mellitus laboured under the bodily infirmity of gout, but his mind was sound and active, cheerfully passing over all earthly things, and always aspiring to love, seek, and attain to those which are celestial. He was noble by birth, but still nobler by the elevation of his mind.

In short, that I may give one instance of his power, from which the rest may be inferred, it happened once that the city of Canterbury, being set on fire through carelessness, was in danger of being consumed by the spreading conflagration; water was thrown on the fire in vain; a considerable part of the city was already destroyed, and the fierce flames were advancing towards the bishop's abode, when he, trusting in God, where human help failed, ordered himself to be carried towards the raging masses of fire which were spreading on every side. The church of the four crowned Martyrs was in the place where the fire raged most fiercely. The bishop, being carried thither by his servants, weak as he was, set about averting by prayer the danger which the strong hands of active men had not been able to overcome with all their exertions. Immediately the wind, which blowing from the south had spread the conflagration throughout the city, veered to the north, and thus prevented the destruction of those places that had been exposed to its full violence, then it ceased entirely and there was a calm, while the flames likewise sank and were extinguished. And because the man of God burned with the fire of divine love, and was wont to drive away the storms of the powers of the air, by his frequent prayers and at his bidding, from doing harm to himself, or his people, it was meet that he should be allowed to prevail over the winds and flames of this world, and to obtain that they should not injure him or his.

This archbishop also, having ruled the church five years, departed to heaven in the reign of King Eadbald, and was buried with his fathers in the monastery and church, which we have so often mentioned, of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, in the year of our Lord 624, on the 24th day of April.

CHAP. 8

Cui statim successit in pontificatum Iustus, qui erat Hrofensis ecclesiae episcopus. Illi autem ecclesiae Romanum pro se consecrauit episcopum, data sibi ordinandi episcopos auctoritate a pontifice Bonifatio, quem successorem fuisse Deusdedit supra meminimus; cuius auctoritatis ista est forma:

Dilectissimo fratri Iusto Bonifatius.

Quam deuote quamque etiam uigilanter pro Christi euangelio elaborauerit uestra fraternitas, non solum epistulae a uobis directae tenor, immo indulta desuper operi uestro perfectio indicauit.

Nec enim omnipotens Deus aut sui nominis sacramentum, aut uestri fructum laboris deseruit, dum ipse praedicatoribus euangelii fideliter repromisit: ‘Ecce ego uobiscum sum omnibus diebus usque ad consummationem mundi.’ Quod specialiter iniuncto uobis ministerio, eius clementia demonstrauit, aperiens corda gentium ad suscipiendum praedicationis uestrae singulare mysterium. Magno enim praemio fastigiorum uestrorum delectabilem cursum bonitatis suae suffragiis inlustrauit, dum creditorum uobis talentorum fidelissimae negotiationis officiis uberem fructum inpendens ei, quod signare possetis multiplicatis generationibus, praeparauit.

Hocque etiam illa uobis repensatione conlatum est, qua iniuncto ministerio iugiter persistentes laudabili patientia redemptionem gentis illius exspectastis, et uestris, ut proficerent, meritis eorum est saluatio propinata, dicente Domino: ‘Qui perseuerauerit usque in finem, hic saluus erit.’ Saluati ergo estis spe patientiae et tolerantiae uirtute, ut infidelium corda naturali ac superstitioso morbo purgata, sui consequerentur misericordiam Saluatoris. Susceptis namque apicibus filii nostri Adulualdi regis, repperimus, quanta sacri eloqui eruditione eius animum ad uerae conuersionis et indubitatae fidei credulitatem fraternitas uestra perduxerit. Qua ex re de longanimitate clementiae caelestis certam adsumentes fiduciam, non solum suppositarum ei gentium plenissimam salutem, immo quoque uicinarum, uestrae praedicationis ministerio credimus subsequendam;

quatinus, sicut scriptum est, consummati operis uobis merces a retributore omnium bonorum Domino tribuatur, et uere ‘per omnem terram exisse sonum eorum, et in fines orbis terrae uerba ipsorum,’

uniuersalis gentium confessio, suscepto Christianae sacramento fidei, protestetur.

Pallium praeterea per latorem praesentium fraternitati tuae, benignitatis studiis inuitati, direximus, quod uidelicet tantum in sacrosanctis celebrandis mysteriis utendi licentiam imperauimus;

concedentes etiam tibi ordinationes episcoporum, exigente oportunitate, Domini praeueniente misericordia, celebrare; ita ut Christi euangelium plurimorum adnuntiatione in omnibus gentibus, quae necdum conuersae sunt, dilatetur. Studeat ergo tua fraternitas hoc, quod sedis apostolicae humanitate percepit, intemerata mentis sinceritate seruare, intendens cuius rei similitudine tam praecipuum indumentum humeris tuis baiulandum suscepis. Talemque te Domini inplorata clementia exhibendum stude, ut indulti muneris praemia non cum reatitudine, sed cum commodis animarum ante tribunal summi et uenturi Iudicis repraesentes.

Deus te incolumem custodiat, dilectissime frater.

Chap. VIII.

How Pope Boniface sent the Pall and a letter to Justus, successor to Mellitus. [624 a.d.]

Justus, bishop of the church of Rochester, immediately succeeded Mellitus in the archbishopric. He consecrated Romanus bishop of that see in his own stead, having obtained authority to ordain bishops from Pope Boniface, whom we mentioned above as successor to Deusdedit: of which licence this is the form:

“Boniface, to his most beloved brother Justus. We have learnt not only from the contents of your letter addressed to us, but from the fulfilment granted to your work, how faithfully and vigilantly you have laboured, my brother, for the Gospel of Christ; for Almighty God has not forsaken either the mystery of His Name, or the fruit of your labours, having Himself faithfully promised to the preachers of the Gospel, ‘Lo! I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world’; which promise His mercy has particularly manifested in this ministry imposed upon you, opening the hearts of the nations to receive the wondrous mystery of your preaching. For He has blessed with a rich reward your Eminence’s acceptable course, by the support of His loving kindness; granting a plentiful increase to your labours in the faithful management of the talents committed to you, and bestowing it on that which you might confirm to many generations. This is conferred on you by that recompense whereby, constantly persevering in the ministry imposed upon you, you have awaited with praiseworthy patience the redemption of that nation, and that they might profit by your merits, salvation has been bestowed on them. For our Lord Himself says, ‘He that endureth to the end shall be saved.’ You are, therefore, saved by the hope of patience, and the virtue of endurance, to the end that the hearts of unbelievers, being cleansed from their natural disease of superstition, might obtain the mercy of their Saviour: for having received letters from our son Adulwald, we perceive with how much knowledge of the Sacred Word you, my brother, have brought his mind to the belief in true conversion and the certainty of the faith. Therefore, firmly

confiding in the long-suffering of the Divine clemency, we believe that, through the ministry of your preaching, there will ensue most full salvation not only of the nations subject to him, but also of their neighbours; to the end, that as it is written, the recompense of a perfect work may be conferred on you by the Lord, the Rewarder of all the just; and that the universal confession of all nations, having received the mystery of the Christian faith, may declare, that in truth ‘Their sound is gone out into all the earth, and their words unto the end of the world.’

“We have also, my brother, moved by the warmth of our goodwill, sent you by the bearer of these presents, the pall, giving you authority to use it only in the celebration of the Sacred Mysteries; granting to you likewise to ordain bishops when there shall be occasion, through the Lord’s mercy; that so the Gospel of Christ, by the preaching of many, may be spread abroad in all the nations that are not yet converted. You must, therefore, endeavour, my brother, to preserve with unblemished sincerity of mind that which you have received through the kindness of the Apostolic see, bearing in mind what it is that is represented by the honourable vestment which you have obtained to be borne on your shoulders. And imploring the Divine mercy, study to show yourself such that you may present before the tribunal of the Supreme Judge that is to come, the rewards of the favour granted to you, not with guiltiness, but with the benefit of souls.

“God preserve you in safety, most dear brother!”

CHAP. 9

Quo tempore etiam gens Nordanhymbrorum, hoc est ea natio Anglorum, quae ad Aquilonalem Hambre fluminis plagam habitabat, cum rege suo Aeduino uerbum fidei praedicante Paulino, cuius supra meminimus, suscepit. Cui uidelicet regi, in auspiciis suscipiendae fidei et regni caelestis, potestas etiam terreni creuerat imperii;

ita ut, quod nemo Anglorum ante eum, omnes Britanniae fines, qua uel ipsorum uel Brettonum prouinciae habitabant, sub dicione acciperet.

Quin et Meuianas insulas, sicut et supra docuimus, imperio subiugauit Anglorum; quarum prior, quae ad austrum est, et situ amplior, et frugum prouentu atque ubertate felicior, nongentarum LX familiarum mensuram iuxta aestimationem Anglorum, secunda trecentarum et ultra spatium tenet.

Huic autem genti occasio fuit percipiendae fidei, quod praefatus rex eius cognatione iunctus est regibus Cantuariorum, accepta in coniugem Aedilbergae filia Aedilbercti regis, quae alio nomine Tatae uocabatur. Huius consortium cum primo ipse missis procis a fratre eius Aeodbaldo, qui tunc regno Cantuariorum praeerat, peteret;

responsum est non esse licitum Christianam uirginem pagano in coniugem dari, ne fides et sacramenta caelestis regis consortio profanarentur regis, qui ueri Dei cultus esset prorsus ignarus. Quae cum Aeduino uerba nuntii referrent, promisit se nil omnimodis contrarium Christianae fidei, quam uirgo colebat, esse facturum;

quin potius permissurum, ut fidem cultumque suae religionis cum omnibus, qui secum uenissent, uiris siue feminis, sacerdotibus seu ministris, more Christiano seruaret. Neque abnegauit se etiam eandem subiturum esse religionem; si tamen examinata a prudentibus sanctior ac Deo dignior posset inueniri.

Itaque promittitur uirgo, atque atduino mittitur, et iuxta quod dispositum fuerat, ordinatur episcopus uir Deo dilectus Paulinus, qui cum illa ueniret, eamque et comites eius, ne paganorum possent societate pollui, cotidiana et exhortatione, et sacramentorum caelestium celebratione confirmaret.

Ordinatus est autem Paulinus episcopus a Iusto archiepiscopo, sub die XII Kalendarum Augustarum, anno ab incarnatione Domini DCXXV; et sic cum praefata uirgine ad regem Aeduinum quasi comes copulae carnalis aduenit. Sed ipse potius toto animo intendens, ut gentem, quam adibat, ad agnitionem ueritatis aduocans, iuxta uocem apostoli, uni uero sponso uirginem castam exhiberet Christo. Cumque in prouinciam uenisset, laborauit multum, ut et eos, qui secum uenerant, ne a fide deficerent, Domino adiuuante contineret, et aliquos, si forte posset, de paganis ad fidei gratiam praedicando conuerteret. Sed sicut apostolus ait, quamuis multo tempore illo laborante in uerbo: ‘Deus

saeculi huius excaecauit mentes infidelium, ne eis fulgeret inluminatio euangelii gloriae Christi.’

Anno autem sequente uenit in prouinciam quidam sicarius uocabulo Eumer, missus a rege Occidentalium Saxonum nomine Cuichelmo, sperans se regem Aeduinum regno simul et uita priuaturum; qui habebat sicam bicipitem toxicatam; ut si ferri uulnus minus ad mortem regis sufficeret, peste iuuaretur ueneni. Peruenit autem ad regem primo die paschae iuxta amnem Deruentionem, ubi tunc erat uilla regalis, intrauitque quasi nuntium domini sui referens; et cum simulatam legationem ore astuto uolueret, exsurrexit repente, et, euaginata sub ueste sica, impetum fecit in regem. Quod cum uideret Lilla minister regi amicissimus, non habens scutum ad manum, quo regem a nece defenderet, mox interposuit corpus suum ante ictum pungentis;

sed tanta ui hostis ferrum infixit, ut per corpus militis occisi etiam regem uulneraret. Qui cum mox undique gladiis inpeteretur, in ipso tumultu etiam alium de militibus, cui nomen erat Fordheri, sica nefanda peremit. Eadem autem nocte sacrosancta dominici paschae pepererat regina filiam regi, cui nomen Atanfled. Cumque idem rex, praesente Paulino episcopo, gratias ageret diis suis pro nata sibi filia, e contra episcopus gratias coepit agere Domino Christo, regique adstruere, quod ipse precibus suis apud illum obtinuerit, ut regina sospes et absque dolore graui sobolem procrearet. Cuius uerbis delectatus rex, promisit se, abrenuntiat is idolis, Christo seruiturum, si uitam sibi et uictoriam donaret pugnanti aduersus regem, a quo homicida ille, qui eum uulnerauerat, missus est; et in pignus promissionis implendae, eandem filiam suam Christo consecrandam Paulino episcopo adsignauit; quae baptizata est die sancto pentecostes prima de gente Nordanhymbrorum, cum XI aliis de familia eius.

Quo tempore curatus a uulnere sibi pridem inflicto, rex collecto exercitu uenit aduersus gentem Occidentalium Saxonum, ac bello inito uniuersos, quos in necem suam conspirasse didicerat, aut occidit, aut in deditionem recepit. Sicque uictor in patriam reuersus, non statim et inconsulte sacramenta fidei Christianae percipere uoluit;

quamuis nec idolis ultra seruiuit, ex quo se Christo seruiturum esse promiserat. Uerum primo diligentius ex tempore, et ab ipso uenerabili uiro Paulino rationem fidei ediscere, et cum suis primatibus, quos sapientiores nouerat, curauit conferre, quid de his agendum arbitrarentur. Sed et ipse, cum esset uir natura sagacissimus, saepe diu solus residens ore quidem tacito, sed in intimis cordis multa secum conloquens, quid sibi esset faciendum, quae religio seruanda tractabat.

Chap. IX.

Of the reign of King Edwin, and how Paulinus, coming to preach the Gospel, first converted his daughter and others to the mysteries of the

At this time the nation of the Northumbrians, that is, the English tribe dwelling on the north side of the river Humber, with their king, Edwin, received the Word of faith through the preaching of Paulinus, of whom we have before spoken. This king, as an earnest of his reception of the faith, and his share in the heavenly kingdom, received an increase also of his temporal realm, for he reduced under his dominion all the parts of Britain that were provinces either of the English, or of the Britons, a thing which no English king had ever done before; and he even subjected to the English the Mevanian islands, as has been said above. The more important of these, which is to the southward, is the larger in extent, and more fruitful, containing nine hundred and sixty families, according to the English computation; the other contains above three hundred.

The occasion of this nation's reception of the faith was the alliance by marriage of their aforesaid king with the kings of Kent, for he had taken to wife Ethelberg, otherwise called Tata, daughter to King Ethelbert. When he first sent ambassadors to ask her in marriage of her brother Eadbald, who then reigned in Kent, he received the answer, "That it was not lawful to give a Christian maiden in marriage to a pagan husband, lest the faith and the mysteries of the heavenly King should be profaned by her union with a king that was altogether a stranger to the worship of the true God." This answer being brought to Edwin by his messengers, he promised that he would in no manner act in opposition to the Christian faith, which the maiden professed; but would give leave to her, and all that went with her, men and women, bishops and clergy, to follow their faith and worship after the custom of the Christians. Nor did he refuse to accept that religion himself, if, being examined by wise men, it should be found more holy and more worthy of God.

So the maiden was promised, and sent to Edwin, and in accordance with the agreement, Paulinus, a man beloved of God, was ordained bishop, to go with her, and by daily exhortations, and celebrating the heavenly Mysteries, to confirm her and her company, lest they should be corrupted by intercourse with the pagans. Paulinus was ordained bishop by the Archbishop Justus, on the 21st day of July, in the year of our Lord 625, and so came to King Edwin with the aforesaid maiden as an attendant on their union in the flesh. But his mind was wholly bent upon calling the nation to which he was sent to the knowledge of truth; according to the words of the Apostle, "To espouse her to the one true Husband, that he might present her as a chaste virgin to Christ." Being come into that province, he laboured much, not only to retain those that went with him, by the help of God, that they should not abandon the faith, but, if haply he might, to convert some of the pagans to the grace of the faith by his preaching. But, as the Apostle says, though he laboured long in the Word, "The god of this world blinded the minds of them that believed not, lest the

light of the glorious Gospel of Christ should shine unto them.”

The next year there came into the province one called Eumer, sent by the king of the West-Saxons, whose name was Cuichelm, to lie in wait for King Edwin, in hopes at once to deprive him of his kingdom and his life. He had a two-edged dagger, dipped in poison, to the end that, if the wound inflicted by the weapon did not avail to kill the king, it might be aided by the deadly venom. He came to the king on the first day of the Easter festival, at the river Derwent, where there was then a royal township, and being admitted as if to deliver a message from his master, whilst unfolding in cunning words his pretended embassy, he started up on a sudden, and unsheathing the dagger under his garment, assaulted the king. When Lilla, the king's most devoted servant, saw this, having no buckler at hand to protect the king from death, he at once interposed his own body to receive the blow; but the enemy struck home with such force, that he wounded the king through the body of the slaughtered thegn. Being then attacked on all sides with swords, in the confusion he also slew impiously with his dagger another of the thegns, whose name was Forthhere.

On that same holy Easter night, the queen had brought forth to the king a daughter, called Eanfled. The king, in the presence of Bishop Paulinus, gave thanks to his gods for the birth of his daughter; and the bishop, on his part, began to give thanks to Christ, and to tell the king, that by his prayers to Him he had obtained that the queen should bring forth the child in safety, and without grievous pain. The king, delighted with his words, promised, that if God would grant him life and victory over the king by whom the murderer who had wounded him had been sent, he would renounce his idols, and serve Christ; and as a pledge that he would perform his promise, he delivered up that same daughter to Bishop Paulinus, to be consecrated to Christ. She was the first to be baptized of the nation of the Northumbrians, and she received Baptism on the holy day of Pentecost, along with eleven others of her house. At that time, the king, being recovered of the wound which he had received, raised an army and marched against the nation of the West-Saxons; and engaging in war, either slew or received in surrender all those of whom he learned that they had conspired to murder him. So he returned victorious into his own country, but he would not immediately and unadvisedly embrace the mysteries of the Christian faith, though he no longer worshipped idols, ever since he made the promise that he would serve Christ; but first took heed earnestly to be instructed at leisure by the venerable Paulinus, in the knowledge of faith, and to confer with such as he knew to be the wisest of his chief men, inquiring what they thought was fittest to be done in that case. And being a man of great natural sagacity, he often sat alone by himself a long time in silence, deliberating in the depths of his heart how he should proceed, and to which religion he should adhere.

CHAP. 10

Quo tempore exhortatorias ad fidem litteras a pontifice sedis apostolicae Bonifatius accepit, quarum ista est forma:

Exemplar epistulae beatissimi et apostolici papae urbis Romanae ecclesiae Bonifatii directae uiro glorioso Āduino regi Anglorum. Uiro glorioso Aeduino regi Anglorum, Bonifatius episcopus seruus seruorum Dei.

Licet summae diuinitatis potentia humanae locutionis officiis explanari non ualeat, quippe quae sui magnitudine ita inuisibili atque inuestigabili aeternitate consistit, ut haec nulla ingenii sagacitas, quanta sit, comprehendere disserereque sufficiat; quia tamen eius humanitas ad insinuationem sui reseratis cordis ianuis, quae de semet ipsa proferetur secreta humanis mentibus inspiratione clementer infundit; ad adnuntiandam uobis plenitudinem fidei Christianae sacerdotalem curauimus sollicitudinem prorogare, ut perinde Christi euangelium, quod Saluator noster omnibus praecepit gentibus praedicari, uestris quoque sensibus inserentes, salutis uestrae remedia propinentur. Supernae igitur maiestatis clementia, quae cuncta solo uerbo praeceptionis suae condidit et creauit, caelum uidelicet et terram, mare et omnia, quae in eis sunt, dispositis ordinibus, quibus subsisterent, coaeterni Uerbi sui consilio, et Sancti Spiritus unitate dispensans, hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem suam ex limo terrae plasmatum constituit, eique tantam praemii praerogatiuam indulsit, ut eum cunctis praeponeret, atque seruato termino praeceptionis, aeternitatis subsistentia praemuniret. Hunc ergo Deum Patrem, et Filium, et Spiritum Sanctum, quod est indiuidua Trinitas, ab ortu solis usque ad occasum, humanum genus, quippe ut creatorem omnium atque factorem suum, salutifera confessione fide ueneratur et colit; cui etiam summitates imperii rerumque potestates submissae sunt, quia eius dispositione omnium praelatio regnorum conceditur. Eius ergo bonitatis misericordia totius creaturae suae dilatandi subdi etiam in extremitate terrae positarum gentium corda frigida, Sancti Spiritus feruore in sui quoque agnitione mirabiliter est dignata succendere.

Quae enim in gloriosi filii nostri Audubaldi regis gentibusque ei subpositis inlustratione, clementia Redemptoris fuerit operata, plenius ex uicinitate locorum uestram gloriam conicimus cognouisse.

Eius ergo mirabile donum et in uobis certa spe, caelesti longanimitate conferri confidimus; cum profecto gloriosam coniugem uestram, quae uestri corporis pars esse dinoscitur, aeternitatis praemio per sacri baptismatis regenerationem inluminatam agnouimus.

Unde praesenti stilo gloriosos uos adhortandos cum omni affectu intimae caritatis curauimus;

quatinus abominatis idolis eorumque cultu, spretisque fanorum fatuitatibus,

et auguriorum deceptabilibus blandimentis, credatis in Deum Patrem omnipotentem, eiusque Filium Iesum Christum, et Spiritum Sanctum, ut credentes, a diabolicae captiuitatis nexibus, sanctae et indiuiduae Trinitatis cooperante potentia, absoluti, aeternae uitae possitis esse participes.

Quanta autem reatitudinis culpa teneantur obstricti hi, qui idolatriarum perniciosissimam superstitionem colentes amplectuntur, eorum, quos colunt, exempla perditionis insinuant; unde de eis per psalmistam dicitur: 'Omnes dii gentium daemonia, Dominus autem caelos fecit.' Et iterum: 'Oculos habent, et non uident; aures habent, et non audiunt; nares habent, et non odorabunt; manus habent, et non palpabunt; pedes habent, et non ambulabunt; similes ergo efficiuntur his, qui spem suae confidentiae ponunt in eis.'

Quomodo enim iuuandi quemlibet possunt habere uirtutem hi, qui ex corruptibili materia inferiorum etiam subpositorumque tibi manibus construuntur; quibus uidelicet artificium humanum adcommodans eis inanimatam membrorum similitudinem contulisti; qui, nisi a te moti fuerint, ambulare non poterunt, sed tamquam lapis in uno loco posita, ita constructi nihilque intellegentiae habentes, ipsaque insensibilitate obruti, nullam neque ledendi neque iuuandi facultatem adepti sunt? Qua ergo mentis deceptione eos deos, quibus uos ipsi imaginem corporis tradidistis, colentes sequimini, iudicio discreto repperire non possumus.

Unde oportet uos, suscepto signo sanctae crucis, per quod humanum genus redemptum est, execrandam diabolicae uersutiae supplantationem, qui diuinæ bonitatis operibus inuidus aemulusque consistit, a cordibus uestris abicere, iniectisque manibus hos, quos eatenus materiae conpage uobis deos fabricastis, confringendos diminuendosque summopere procurate. Ipsa enim eorum dissolutio corruptioque, quae numquam uiuentem spiritum habuit, nec sensibilitatem a suis factoribus potuit quolibet modo suscipere, uobis patenter insinuet, quam nihil erat, quod eatenus colebatis;

dum profecto meliores uos, qui spiritum uiuentem a Domino percepistis, eorum constructioni nihilominus existatis; quippe quos Deus omnipotens ex primi hominis, quem plasmavit, cognatione, deductis per saecula innumerabilibus propaginibus, pullulare constituit. Accedite ergo ad agnitionem eius, qui uos creauit, qui in uobis uitae insufflauit spiritum, qui pro uestra redemptione Filium suum unigenitum misit, ut uos ab originali peccato eriperet, et ereptos de potestate nequitiae diabolicae prauitatis caelestibus praemiis muneraret.

Suscipite uerba praedicatorum, et euangelium Dei, quod uobis adnuntiant; quatinus credentes, sicut saepius dictum est, in Deum Patrem omnipotentem, et in Iesum Christum eius Filium, et Spiritum Sanctum, et inseparabilem Trinitatem; fugatis daemoniorum sensibus, expulsaque a uobis sollicitatione uenenosi et deceptibilis hostis, per aquam et Spiritum Sanctum renati ei, cui credideritis, in splendore gloriae sempiternae cohabitare, eius opitulante

munificentia ualeatis.

Praeterea benedictionem protectoris uestri beati Petri apostolorum principis uobis direximus, id est camisia cum ornatura in auro una, et lena Anciriana una; quod petimus, ut eo benignitatis animo gloria uestra suscipiat, quo a nobis noscitur destinatum.

Chap. X.

How Pope Boniface, by letter, exhorted the same king to embrace the faith. [*Circ. 625 a.d.*]

At this time he received a letter from Pope Boniface exhorting him to embrace the faith, which was as follows:

COPY OF THE LETTER OF THE MOST BLESSED AND APOSTOLIC POPE OF THE CHURCH OF THE CITY OF ROME, BONIFACE, ADDRESSED TO THE ILLUSTRIOUS EDWIN, KING OF THE ENGLISH.

“To the illustrious Edwin, king of the English, Bishop Boniface, the servant of the servants of God. Although the power of the Supreme Deity cannot be expressed by the function of human speech, seeing that, by its own greatness, it so consists in invisible and unsearchable eternity, that no keenness of wit can comprehend or express how great it is; yet inasmuch as His Humanity, having opened the doors of the heart to receive Himself, mercifully, by secret inspiration, puts into the minds of men such things as It reveals concerning Itself, we have thought fit to extend our episcopal care so far as to make known to you the fulness of the Christian faith; to the end that, bringing to your knowledge the Gospel of Christ, which our Saviour commanded should be preached to all nations, we might offer to you the cup of the means of salvation.

“Thus the goodness of the Supreme Majesty, which, by the word alone of His command, made and created all things, the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, disposing the order by which they should subsist, hath, ordaining all things, with the counsel of His co-eternal Word, and the unity of the Holy Spirit, made man after His own image and likeness, forming him out of the mire of the earth; and granted him such high privilege of distinction, as to place him above all else; so that, preserving the bounds of the law of his being, his substance should be established to eternity. This God, — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the undivided Trinity, — from the east unto the west, through faith by confession to the saving of their souls, men worship and adore as the Creator of all things, and their own Maker; to Whom also the heights of empire and the powers of the world are subject, because the pre-eminence of all kingdoms is granted by His disposition. It hath pleased Him, therefore, in the mercy of His loving kindness, and for the greater benefit of all His creatures, by the fire of His Holy Spirit wonderfully to kindle the cold

hearts even of the nations seated at the extremities of the earth in the knowledge of Himself.

“For we suppose, since the two countries are near together, that your Highness has fully understood what the clemency of our Redeemer has effected in the enlightenment of our illustrious son, King Eadbald, and the nations under his rule; we therefore trust, with assured confidence that, through the long-suffering of Heaven, His wonderful gift will be also conferred on you; since, indeed, we have learnt that your illustrious consort, who is discerned to be one flesh with you, has been blessed with the reward of eternity, through the regeneration of Holy Baptism. We have, therefore, taken care by this letter, with all the goodwill of heartfelt love, to exhort your Highness, that, abhorring idols and their worship, and despising the foolishness of temples, and the deceitful flatteries of auguries, you believe in God the Father Almighty, and His Son Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost, to the end that, believing and being released from the bonds of captivity to the Devil, you may, through the co-operating power of the Holy and undivided Trinity, be partaker of the eternal life.

“How great guilt they lie under, who adhere in their worship to the pernicious superstition of idolatry, appears by the examples of the perishing of those whom they worship. Wherefore it is said of them by the Psalmist, ‘All the gods of the nations are devils, but the Lord made the heavens.’ And again, ‘Eyes have they, but they see not; they have ears, but they hear not; noses have they, but they smell not; they have hands, but they handle not; feet have they, but they walk not. Therefore they are made like unto those that place the hope of their confidence in them.’ For how can they have power to help any man, that are made out of corruptible matter, by the hands of your inferiors and subjects, and on which, by employing human art, you have bestowed a lifeless similitude of members? which, moreover, unless they be moved by you, will not be able to walk; but, like a stone fixed in one place, being so formed, and having no understanding, sunk in insensibility, have no power of doing harm or good. We cannot, therefore, by any manner of discernment conceive how you come to be so deceived as to follow and worship those gods, to whom you yourselves have given the likeness of a body.

“It behoves you, therefore, by taking upon you the sign of the Holy Cross, by which the human race has been redeemed, to root out of your hearts all the accursed deceitfulness of the snares of the Devil, who is ever the jealous foe of the works of the Divine Goodness, and to put forth your hands and with all your might set to work to break in pieces and destroy those which you have hitherto fashioned of wood or stone to be your gods. For the very destruction and decay of these, which never had the breath of life in them, nor could in any wise receive feeling from their makers, may plainly teach you how worthless that was which you hitherto worshipped. For you yourselves, who have received the breath of life from the Lord, are certainly better than these

which are wrought with hands, seeing that Almighty God has appointed you to be descended, after many ages and through many generations, from the first man whom he formed. Draw near, then, to the knowledge of Him Who created you, Who breathed the breath of life into you, Who sent His only-begotten Son for your redemption, to save you from original sin, that being delivered from the power of the Devil's perversity and wickedness, He might bestow on you a heavenly reward.

“Hearken to the words of the preachers, and the Gospel of God, which they declare to you, to the end that, believing, as has been said before more than once, in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ His Son, and the Holy Ghost, and the indivisible Trinity, having put to flight the thoughts of devils, and driven from you the temptations of the venomous and deceitful enemy, and being born again of water and the Holy Ghost, you may, through the aid of His bounty, dwell in the brightness of eternal glory with Him in Whom you shall have believed.

“We have, moreover, sent you the blessing of your protector, the blessed Peter, chief of the Apostles, to wit, a shirt of proof with one gold ornament, and one cloak of Ancyra, which we pray your Highness to accept with all the goodwill with which it is sent by us.”

CHAP. 11

Ad coniugem quoque illius Aedilbergam huiusmodi litteras idem pontifex misit:

Exemplar epistulae beatissimi et apostolici Bonifatii papae urbis Romae directae Aedilbergae reginae Aeduini regis.

Dominae gloriosae filiae Aedilbergae reginae, Bonifatius episcopus seruus seruorum Dei.

Redemptoris nostri benignitas humano generi, quod pretiosi sanguinis sui effusione a uinculis diabolicae captiuitatis eripuit, multae prouidentiae, quibus saluaretur, propinauit remedia;

quatinus sui nominis agnitionem diuerso modo gentibus innotescens, Creatorem suum suscepto Christianae fidei agnoscerent sacramento. Quod equidem in uestrae gloriae sensibus caelesti conlatum munere mystica regenerationis uestrae purgatio patenter innuit. Magno ergo largitatis dominicae beneficio mens nostra gaudio exultauit, quod scintillam orthodoxae religionis in uestri dignatus est confessione succendere; ex qua re non solum gloriosi coniugis uestri, immo totius gentis subpositae uobis intellegentiam in amore sui facilius inflammaret.

Didicimus namque referentibus his, qui ad nos gloriosi filii nostri Audubaldi regis laudabilem conuersionem nuntiantes peruenerunt, quod etiam uestra gloria, Christianae fidei suscepto mirabili sacramento, piis et Deo placitis iugiter operibus enitescat, ab idolorum etiam cultu seu fanorum auguriorumque inlcebris se diligenter absterneat, et ita in amore Redemptoris sui inmutata deuotione persistens inuigilet, ut ad dilatandam Christianam fidem incessabiliter non desistat operam commodare; cumque de glorioso coniuge uestro paterna caritas sollicitè perquisisset, cognouimus, quod eatenus abominandis idolis seruiens, ad suscipiendam uocem praedicatorum suam distulerit obedientiam exhibere. Qua ex re non modica nobis amaritudo congesta est, ab eo, quod pars corporis uestri ab agnitione summae et indiuiduae Trinitatis remansit extranea. Unde paternis officiis uestrae gloriosae Christianitati nostram commonitionem non distulimus conferendam; adhortantes, quatinus diuinae inspirationis inbuta subsidiis, inopportune et oportune agendum non differas, ut et ipse, Saluatoris nostri Domini Iesu Christi cooperante potentia, Christianorum numero copuletur; ut perinde intemerato societatis foedere iura teneas maritalis consortii. Scriptum namque est: 'Erunt duo in carne una.' Quomodo ergo unitas uobis coniunctionis inesse dici poterit, si a uestrae fidei splendore, interpositis detestabilis erroris tenebris, ille remanserit alienus?

Unde orationi continuae insistens a longanimitate caelestis clementiae inluminationis ipsius beneficia inpetrare non desinas; ut uidelicet, quos

copulatio carnalis affectus unum quodam modo corpus exhibuisse monstratur, hos quoque unitas fidei etiam post huius uitae transitum in perpetua societate conseruet. Insiste ergo, gloriosa filia, et summis conatibus duritiam cordis ipsius religiosa diuinorum praeceptorum insinuatione mollire summopere dematura;

infundens sensibus eius, quantum sit praeclarum, quod credendo suscepisti, mysterium, quantumue sit admirabile, quod renata praemium consequi meruisti. Frigiditatem cordis ipsius Sancti Spiritus adnuntiatione succende; quatinus amoto torpore perniciosissimi cultus, diuinae fidei calor eius intelligentiam tuarum adhortationum frequentatione succendat, ut profecto sacrae scripturae testimonium per te expletum indubitanter perclareat: ‘Saluabitur uir infidelis per mulierem fidelem.’ Ad hoc enim misericordiam dominicae pietatis consecuta es, ut fructum fidei creditorumque tibi beneficiorum Redemptori tuo multiplicem resignares. Quod equidem, suffragante praesidio benignitatis ipsius, ut explere ualeas, adsiduis non desistimus precibus postulare.

His ergo praemissis, paternae uobis dilectionis exhibentes officia, hortamur, ut nos reperta portitoris occasione de his, quae per uos superna potentia mirabiliter in conuersatione coniugis uestri summissaeque uobis gentis dignatus fuerit operari, prosperis quantocius nuntiis releuetis, quatinus sollicitudo nostra, quae de uestri uestrorumque omnium animae salute optabilia desideranter exspectat, uobis nuntiantibus releuetur, inlustrationemque diuinae propitiationis in uobis diffusam opulenter agnoscentes, hilari confessione largitori omnium bonorum Deo, et beato Petro apostolorum principi uberes merito gratias exsoluamus.

Praeterea benedictionem protectoris uestri beati Petri apostolorum principis uobis direximus, id est speculum argenteum, et pectinem eboreum inauratum; quod petimus, ut eo benignitatis animo gloria uestra suscipiat, quo a nobis noscitur destinatum.

Chap. XI.

How Pope Boniface advised the king’s consort to use her best endeavours for his salvation. [Circ.625 a.d.]

The same pope also wrote to King Edwin’s consort, Ethelberg, to this effect:

THE COPY OF THE LETTER OF THE MOST BLESSED AND APOSTOLIC BONIFACE, POPE OF THE CITY OF ROME, TO ETHELBERG, KING EDWIN’S QUEEN.

“To the illustrious lady his daughter, Queen Ethelberg, Boniface, bishop, servant of the servants of God. The goodness of our Redeemer has in His abundant Providence offered the means of salvation to the human race, which He rescued, by the shedding of His precious Blood, from the bonds of

captivity to the Devil; to the end that, when He had made known His name in divers ways to the nations, they might acknowledge their Creator by embracing the mystery of the Christian faith. And this the mystical purification of your regeneration plainly shows to have been bestowed upon the mind of your Highness by God's gift. Our heart, therefore, has greatly rejoiced in the benefit bestowed by the bounty of the Lord, for that He has vouchsafed, in your confession, to kindle a spark of the orthodox religion, by which He might the more easily inflame with the love of Himself the understanding, not only of your illustrious consort, but also of all the nation that is subject to you.

“For we have been informed by those, who came to acquaint us with the laudable conversion of our illustrious son, King Eadbald, that your Highness, also, having received the wonderful mystery of the Christian faith, continually excels in the performance of works pious and acceptable to God; that you likewise carefully refrain from the worship of idols, and the deceits of temples and auguries, and with unimpaired devotion, give yourself so wholly to the love of your Redeemer, as never to cease from lending your aid in spreading the Christian faith. But when our fatherly love earnestly inquired concerning your illustrious consort, we were given to understand, that he still served abominable idols, and delayed to yield obedience in giving ear to the voice of the preachers. This occasioned us no small grief, that he that is one flesh with you still remained a stranger to the knowledge of the supreme and undivided Trinity. Whereupon we, in our fatherly care, have not delayed to admonish and exhort your Christian Highness, to the end that, filled with the support of the Divine inspiration, you should not defer to strive, both in season and out of season, that with the co-operating power of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, your husband also may be added to the number of Christians; that so you may uphold the rights of marriage in the bond of a holy and unblemished union. For it is written, ‘They twain shall be one flesh.’ How then can it be said, that there is unity in the bond between you, if he continues a stranger to the brightness of your faith, separated from it by the darkness of detestable error?

“Wherefore, applying yourself continually to prayer, do not cease to beg of the long-suffering of the Divine Mercy the benefits of his illumination; to the end, that those whom the union of carnal affection has manifestly made in a manner to be one body, may, after this life continue in perpetual fellowship, by the unity of faith. Persist, therefore, illustrious daughter, and to the utmost of your power endeavour to soften the hardness of his heart by carefully making known to him the Divine precepts; pouring into his mind a knowledge of the greatness of that mystery which you have received by faith, and of the marvellous reward which, by the new birth, you have been made worthy to obtain. Inflame the coldness of his heart by the message of the Holy Ghost, that he may put from him the deadness of an evil worship, and the warmth of

the Divine faith may kindle his understanding through your frequent exhortations; and so the testimony of Holy Scripture may shine forth clearly, fulfilled by you, ‘The unbelieving husband shall be saved by the believing wife.’ For to this end you have obtained the mercy of the Lord’s goodness, that you might restore with increase to your Redeemer the fruit of faith and of the benefits entrusted to your hands. That you may be able to fulfil this task, supported by the help of His loving kindness we do not cease to implore with frequent prayers.

“Having premised thus much, in pursuance of the duty of our fatherly affection, we exhort you, that when the opportunity of a bearer shall offer, you will with all speed comfort us with the glad tidings of the wonderful work which the heavenly Power shall vouchsafe to perform by your means in the conversion of your consort, and of the nation subject to you; to the end, that our solicitude, which earnestly awaits the fulfilment of its desire in the soul’s salvation of you and yours, may, by hearing from you, be set at rest; and that we, discerning more fully the light of the Divine propitiation shed abroad in you, may with a joyful confession abundantly return due thanks to God, the Giver of all good things, and to the blessed Peter, the chief of the Apostles.

“We have, moreover, sent you the blessing of your protector, the blessed Peter, the chief of the Apostles, to wit, a silver looking-glass, and a gilded ivory comb, which we pray your Highness to accept with all the goodwill with which it is sent by us.”

CHAP. 12

Haec quidem memoratus papa Bonifatius de salute regis Aeduini ac gentis ipsius litteris agebat. Sed et oraculum caeleste, quod illi quondam exulanti apud Redualdum regem Anglorum pietas diuina reuelare dignata est, non minimum ad suscipienda uel intellegenda doctrinae monita salutaris sensum iuuit illius. Cum ergo uideret Paulinus difficulter posse sublimitatem animi regalis ad humilitatem uiae salutaris, et suscipiendum mysterium uiuificaec crucis inclinari, ac pro salute illius simul et gentis, cui praeerat, et uerbo exhortationis apud homines, et apud diuinam pietatem uerbo deprecationis ageret; tandem, ut uerisimile uidetur, didicit in spiritu, quod uel quale esset oraculum regi quondam caelitus ostensum. Nec exinde distulit, quin continuo regem ammoneret explere uotum, quod in oraculo sibi exhibito se facturum promiserat, si temporis illius erumnis exemptus ad regni fastigia perueniret.

Erat autem oraculum huiusmodi. Cum persequente illum Aedilfrido, qui ante eum regnauit, per diuersa occultus loca uel regna multo annorum tempore profugus uagaretur, tandem uenit ad Redualdum obsecrans, ut uitam suam a tanti persecutoris insidiis tutando seruaret; qui libenter eum excipiens, promisit se, quae petebatur, esse facturum. At postquam Aedilfrid in hac eum prouincia apparuisse, et apud regem illius familiariter cum sociis habitare cognouit, misit nuntios, qui Redualdo pecuniam multam pro nece eius offerrent; neque aliquid profecit. Misit secundo, misit tertio, et copiosiora argenti dona offerens, et bellum insuper illi, si contemneretur, indicens. Qui uel minis fractus, uel corruptus muneribus, cessit deprecanti, et siue occidere se Aeduinum, seu legatariis tradere promisit. Quod ubi fidissimus quidam amicus illius animaduertit, intrauit cubiculum, quo dormire disponebat, erat enim prima hora noctis, et euocatum foras, quid erga eum agere rex promississet, edocuit, et insuper adiecit: 'Si ergo uis, hac ipsa hora educam te de hac prouincia, et ea in loca introducam, ubi numquam te uel Reduald, uel Aedilfrid inuenire ualeant.' Qui ait: 'Gratias quidem ago beneuolentiae tuae;

non tamen hoc facere possum, quod suggeris, ut pactum, quod cum tanto rege ini, ipse primus irritum faciam, cum ille mihi nil mali fecerit, nil adhuc inimicitiarum intulerit. Quin potius, si moriturus sum, ille me magis quam ignobilior quisque morti tradat. Quo enim nunc fugiam, qui per omnes Britanniae prouincias tot annorum temporumque curriculis uagabundus hostium uitabam insidias?'

Abeunte igitur amico, remansit Aeduini solus foris, residensque mestus ante palatium, multis coepit cogitationum aestibus affici, quid ageret, quoque pedem uerteret, nescius.

Cumque diu tacitis mentis angoribus, et caeco carperetur igni, uidit subito intempesta nocte silentio adpropinquantem sibi hominem uultus habitusque incogniti; quem uidens, ut ignotum et inopinatum, non parum expauit. At ille

accedens salutauit eum, et interrogauit, quare illa hora, ceteris quiescentibus, et alto sopore pressis, solus ipse mestus in lapide peruigil sederet. At ille uicissim sciscitabatur, quid ad eum pertineret, utrum ipse intus an foris noctem transigeret. Qui respondens ait: ‘Ne me aestimes tuae mestitiae et insomniorum, et forinsecae et solitariae sessionis causam nescire; scio enim certissime qui es, et quare meres, et quae uentura tibi in proximo mala formidas. Sed dicito mihi, quid mercedis dare uelis ei, siqui sit, qui his te meroribus absoluat, et Redualdo suadeat, ut nec ipse tibi aliquid mali faciat, nec tuis te hostibus perimendum tradat.’ Qui cum se omnia, quae posset, huic tali pro mercede beneficii daturum esse responderet, adiecit ille: ‘Quod si etiam regem te futurum extinctis hostibus in ueritate promittat, ita ut non solum omnes tuos progenitores, sed et omnes, qui ante te reges in gente Anglorum fuerant, potestate transcendas?’ At Aeduini constantior interrogando factus, non dubitauit promittere, quin ei, qui tanta sibi beneficia donaret, dignis ipse gratiarum actionibus responderet. Tum ille tertio: ‘Si autem,’

inquit, ‘is, qui tibi tanta taliaque dona ueraciter aduentura praedixerit, etiam consilium tibi tuae salutis ac uitae melius atque utilius, quam aliquis de tuis parentibus aut cognatis umquam audiuit, ostendere potuerit, num ei obtemperare, et monita eius salutaria suscipere consentis?’

Nec distulit Aduini, quin continuo polliceretur in omnibus se secuturum doctrinam illius, qui se tot ac tantis calamitatibus ereptum, ad regni apicem prouheret. Quo accepto responso, confestim is, qui loquebatur cum eo, inposuit dexteram suam capiti eius dicens: ‘Cum hoc ergo tibi signum aduenerit, memento huius temporis ac loquellae nostrae, et ea, quae nunc promittis, adimplere ne differas.’ Et his dictis, ut ferunt, repente disparuit, ut intellexeret non hominem esse, qui sibi apparuisset, sed spiritum.

Et cum regius iuuenis solus adhuc ibidem sederet, gaudis quidem de conlata sibi consolatione, sed multum sollicitus, ac mente sedula cogitans, quis esset ille, uel unde ueniret, qui haec sibi loqueretur, uenit ad eum praefatus amicus illius, laetoque uultu salutans eum: ‘Surge,’

inquit, ‘intra, et sopitis ac relictis curarum anxietatibus, quieti membra simul et animum conpone, quia mutatum est cor regis, nec tibi aliquid mali facere, sed fidem potius pollicitam seruare disponit; postquam enim cogitationem suam, de qua tibi ante dixi, reginae in secreto reuelauit, reuocauit eum illa ab intentione, ammonens, quia nulla ratione conueniat tanto regi amicum suum optimum in necessitate positum auro uendere, immo fidem suam, quae omnibus ornamentis pretiosior est, amore pecuniae perdere.’ Quid plura? Fecit rex, ut dictum est; nec solum exulem nuntiis hostilibus non tradidit, sed etiam eum, ut in regnum perueniret, adiunxit.

Nam mox redeuntibus domum nuntiis, exercitum ad debellandum Aedilfridum colligit copiosum, eumque sibi occurrentem cum exercitu

multum inpari (non enim dederat illi spatium, quo totum suum congregaret atque adunaret exercitum), occidit in finibus gentis Merciorum ad orientalem plagam amnis, qui uocatur Idla; in quo certamine et filius Redualdi, uocabulo Ragenheri, occisus est.

Ac sic Aeduini iuxta oraculum, quod acceperat, non tantum regis sibi infesti insidias uitauit, uerum etiam eidem peremto in regni gloriam successit.

Cum ergo praedicante uerbum Dei Paulino rex credere differret, et per aliquod tempus, ut diximus, horis competentibus solitarius sederet, quid agendum sibi esset, quae religio sequenda, sedulus secum ipse scrutari consuesset, ingrediens ad eum quadam die uir Dei, inposuit dexteram capiti eius et, an hoc signum agnosceret, requisiiuit. Qui cum tremens ad pedes eius procidere uellet, leuauit eum, et quasi familiari uoce affatus: ‘Ecce,’

inquit, ‘hostium manus, quos timuisti, Domino donante euasisti; ecce regnum, quod desiderasti, ipso largiente percepisti. Memento, ut tertium, quod promisisti, facere ne differas, suscipiendo fidem eius, et praecepta seruando, qui te et a temporalibus aduersis eripiens, temporalis regni honore sublimauit; et si deinceps uoluntati eius, quam per me tibi praedicat, obsecundare uolueris, etiam a perpetuis malorum tormentis te liberans, aeterni secum regni in caelis faciet esse participem.’

Chap. XII.

How Edwin was persuaded to believe by a vision which he had once seen when he was in exile. [*Circ. 616 a.d.*]

Thus wrote the aforesaid Pope Boniface for the salvation of King Edwin and his nation. But a heavenly vision, which the Divine Goodness was pleased once to reveal to this king, when he was in banishment at the court of Redwald, king of the Angles, was of no little use in urging him to receive and understand the doctrines of salvation. For when Paulinus perceived that it was a difficult task to incline the king’s proud mind to the humility of the way of salvation and the reception of the mystery of the life-giving Cross, and at the same time was employing the word of exhortation with men, and prayer to the Divine Goodness, for the salvation of Edwin and his subjects; at length, as we may suppose, it was shown him in spirit what the nature of the vision was that had been formerly revealed from Heaven to the king. Then he lost no time, but immediately admonished the king to perform the vow which he had made, when he received the vision, promising to fulfil it, if he should be delivered from the troubles of that time, and advanced to the throne.

The vision was this. When Ethelfrid, his predecessor, was persecuting him, he wandered for many years as an exile, hiding in divers places and kingdoms, and at last came to Redwald, beseeching him to give him protection against the snares of his powerful persecutor. Redwald willingly

received him, and promised to perform what was asked of him. But when Ethelfrid understood that he had appeared in that province, and that he and his companions were hospitably entertained by Redwald, he sent messengers to bribe that king with a great sum of money to murder him, but without effect. He sent a second and a third time, offering a greater bribe each time, and, moreover, threatening to make war on him if his offer should be despised. Redwald, whether terrified by his threats, or won over by his gifts, complied with this request, and promised either to kill Edwin, or to deliver him up to the envoys. A faithful friend of his, hearing of this, went into his chamber, where he was going to bed, for it was the first hour of the night; and calling him out, told him what the king had promised to do with him, adding, "If, therefore, you are willing, I will this very hour conduct you out of this province, and lead you to a place where neither Redwald nor Ethelfrid shall ever find you." He answered, "I thank you for your good will, yet I cannot do what you propose, and be guilty of being the first to break the compact I have made with so great a king, when he has done me no harm, nor shown any enmity to me; but, on the contrary, if I must die, let it rather be by his hand than by that of any meaner man. For whither shall I now fly, when I have for so many long years been a vagabond through all the provinces of Britain, to escape the snares of my enemies?" His friend went away; Edwin remained alone without, and sitting with a heavy heart before the palace, began to be overwhelmed with many thoughts, not knowing what to do, or which way to turn.

When he had remained a long time in silent anguish of mind, consumed with inward fire, on a sudden in the stillness of the dead of night he saw approaching a person, whose face and habit were strange to him, at sight of whom, seeing that he was unknown and unlooked for, he was not a little startled. The stranger coming close up, saluted him, and asked why he sat there in solitude on a stone troubled and wakeful at that time, when all others were taking their rest, and were fast asleep. Edwin, in his turn, asked, what it was to him, whether he spent the night within doors or abroad. The stranger, in reply, said, "Do not think that I am ignorant of the cause of your grief, your watching, and sitting alone without. For I know of a surety who you are, and why you grieve, and the evils which you fear will soon fall upon you. But tell me, what reward you would give the man who should deliver you out of these troubles, and persuade Redwald neither to do you any harm himself, nor to deliver you up to be murdered by your enemies." Edwin replied, that he would give such an one all that he could in return for so great a benefit. The other further added, "What if he should also assure you, that your enemies should be destroyed, and you should be a king surpassing in power, not only all your own ancestors, but even all that have reigned before you in the English nation?" Edwin, encouraged by these questions, did not hesitate to promise that he would make a fitting return to him who should confer such benefits upon him. Then the other spoke a third time and said, "But if he who

should truly foretell that all these great blessings are about to befall you, could also give you better and more profitable counsel for your life and salvation than any of your fathers or kindred ever heard, do you consent to submit to him, and to follow his wholesome guidance?" Edwin at once promised that he would in all things follow the teaching of that man who should deliver him from so many great calamities, and raise him to a throne.

Having received this answer, the man who talked to him laid his right hand on his head saying, "When this sign shall be given you, remember this present discourse that has passed between us, and do not delay the performance of what you now promise." Having uttered these words, he is said to have immediately vanished. So the king perceived that it was not a man, but a spirit, that had appeared to him.

Whilst the royal youth still sat there alone, glad of the comfort he had received, but still troubled and earnestly pondering who he was, and whence he came, that had so talked to him, his aforesaid friend came to him, and greeting him with a glad countenance, "Rise," said he, "go in; calm and put away your anxious cares, and compose yourself in body and mind to sleep; for the king's resolution is altered, and he designs to do you no harm, but rather to keep his pledged faith; for when he had privately made known to the queen his intention of doing what I told you before, she dissuaded him from it, reminding him that it was altogether unworthy of so great a king to sell his good friend in such distress for gold, and to sacrifice his honour, which is more valuable than all other adornments, for the love of money." In short, the king did as has been said, and not only refused to deliver up the banished man to his enemy's messengers, but helped him to recover his kingdom. For as soon as the messengers had returned home, he raised a mighty army to subdue Ethelfrid; who, meeting him with much inferior forces, (for Redwald had not given him time to gather and unite all his power,) was slain on the borders of the kingdom of Mercia, on the east side of the river that is called Idle. In this battle, Redwald's son, called Raegenheri, was killed. Thus Edwin, in accordance with the prophecy he had received, not only escaped the danger from his enemy, but, by his death, succeeded the king on the throne.

King Edwin, therefore, delaying to receive the Word of God at the preaching of Paulinus, and being wont for some time, as has been said, to sit many hours alone, and seriously to ponder with himself what he was to do, and what religion he was to follow, the man of God came to him one day, laid his right hand on his head, and asked, whether he knew that sign? The king, trembling, was ready to fall down at his feet, but he raised him up, and speaking to him with the voice of a friend, said, "Behold, by the gift of God you have escaped the hands of the enemies whom you feared. Behold, you have obtained of His bounty the kingdom which you desired. Take heed not to delay to perform your third promise; accept the faith, and keep the precepts of Him Who, delivering you from temporal adversity, has raised you to the

honour of a temporal kingdom; and if, from this time forward, you shall be obedient to His will, which through me He signifies to you, He will also deliver you from the everlasting torments of the wicked, and make you partaker with Him of His eternal kingdom in heaven.”

CHAP. 13

Quibus auditis, rex suscipere quidem se fidem, quam docebat, et uelle et debere respondebat. Uerum adhuc cum amicis principibus et consiliariis suis sese de hoc conlaturum esse dicebat, ut, si et illi eadem cum illo sentire uellent, omnes pariter in fonte uitae Christo consecrarentur. Et adnuente Paulino, fecit, ut dixerat. Habito enim cum sapientibus consilio, sciscitabatur singillatim ab omnibus, qualis sibi doctrina haec eatenus inaudita, et nouus diuinitatis, qui praedicabatur, cultus uideretur.

Cui primus pontificum ipsius Coifi continuo respondit: ‘Tu uide, rex, quale sit hoc, quod nobis modo praedicatur; ego autem tibi uerissime, quod certum didici, profiteor, quia nihil omnino uirtutis habet, nihil utilitatis religio illa, quam hucusque tenuimus. Nullus enim tuorum studiosius quam ego culturae deorum nostrorum se subdidit; et nihilominus multi sunt, qui ampliora a te beneficia quam ego, et maiores accipiunt dignitates, magisque prosperantur in omnibus, quae agenda uel acquirenda disponunt. Si autem dii aliquid ualerent, me potius iuuare uellent, qui illis inpensius seruire curauim. Unde restat, ut si ea, quae nunc nobis noua praedicantur, meliora esse et fortiora, habita examinatione perspexeris, absque ullo cunctamine suscipere illa festinemus.’

Cuius suasioni uerbisque prudentibus alius optimatum regis tribuens assensum, continuo subdidit: ‘Talis,’ inquit, ‘mihi uidetur, rex, uita hominum praesens in terris, ad conparationem eius, quod nobis incertum est, temporis, quale cum te residente ad caenam cum ducibus ac ministris tuis tempore brumali, accenso quidem foco in medio, et calido effecto caenaculo, furentibus autem foris per omnia turbinibus hiemalium pluuiarum uel niuium, adueniens unus passeium domum citissime peruolauerit; qui cum per unum ostium ingrediens, mox per aliud exierit. Ipso quidem tempore, quo intus est, hiemis tempestate non tangitur, sed tamen paruissimo spatio serenitatis ad momentum excursu, mox de hieme in hiemem regrediens, tuis oculis elabatur. Ita haec uita hominum ad modicum apparet; quid autem sequatur, quidue praecesserit, prorsus ignoramus. Unde si haec noua doctrina certius aliquid attulit, merito esse sequenda uidetur.’ His similia et ceteri maiores natu ac regis consilarii diuinitus admoniti prosequerentur.

Adiecit autem Coifi, quia uellet ipsum Paulinum diligentius audire de Deo, quem praedicabat, uerbum facientem. Quod cum iubente rege faceret, exclamauit auditis eius sermonibus dicens: ‘Iam olim intellexeram nihil esse, quod colebamus; quia uidelicet, quanto studiosius in eo cultu ueritatem quaerebam, tanto minus inueniebam.

Nunc autem aperte profiteor, quia in hac praedicatione ueritas claret illa, quae nobis uitae, salutis, et beatitudinis aeternae dona ualeat tribuere. Unde suggero, rex, ut templa et altaria, quae sine fructu utilitatis sacrauiimus, ocuis anathemati et igni contradamus.’ Quid plura? praebuit palam adsensum

euangelizanti beato Paulino rex, et, abrenuntiata idolatria, fidem se Christi suscipere confessus est. Cumque a praefato pontifice sacrorum suorum quaereret, quis aras et fana idolorum cum septis, quibus erant circumdata. primus profanare deberet; ille respondit: ‘Ego. Quis enim ea, quae per stultitiam colui, nunc ad exemplum omnium aptius quam ipse per sapientiam mihi a Deo uero donatam destruum?’

Statimque, abiecta superstitione uanitatis, rogauit sibi regem arma dare et equum emissarium, quem ascendens ad idola destruenda ueniret. Non enim licuerat pontificem sacrorum uel arma ferre, uel praeter in equa equitare. Accinctus ergo gladio accepit lanceam in manu, et ascendens emissarium regis, pergebat ad idola. Quod aspiciens uulgus, aestimabat eum insanire. Nec distulit ille, mox ut adpropiabat ad fanum, profanare illud, iniecta in eo lancea, quam tenebat; multumque gauisus de agnitione ueri Dei cultus, iussit sociis destruere ac succendere fanum cum omnibus septis suis.

Ostenditur autem locus ille quondam idolorum non longe ab Eburaco ad orientem, ultra amnem Doruentionem, et uocatur hodie Godmunddingaham, ubi pontifex ipse, inspirante Deo uero, polluit ac destruxit eas, quas ipse sacrauerat, aras.

Chap. XIII.

Of the Council he held with his chief men concerning their reception of the faith of Christ, and how the high priest profaned his own altars. [627 a.d.]

The king, hearing these words, answered, that he was both willing and bound to receive the faith which Paulinus taught; but that he would confer about it with his chief friends and counsellors, to the end that if they also were of his opinion, they might all together be consecrated to Christ in the font of life. Paulinus consenting, the king did as he said; for, holding a council with the wise men, he asked of every one in particular what he thought of this doctrine hitherto unknown to them, and the new worship of God that was preached? The chief of his own priests, Coifi, immediately answered him, “O king, consider what this is which is now preached to us; for I verily declare to you what I have learnt beyond doubt, that the religion which we have hitherto professed has no virtue in it and no profit. For none of your people has applied himself more diligently to the worship of our gods than I; and yet there are many who receive greater favours from you, and are more preferred than I, and are more prosperous in all that they undertake to do or to get. Now if the gods were good for any thing, they would rather forward me, who have been careful to serve them with greater zeal. It remains, therefore, that if upon examination you find those new doctrines, which are now preached to us, better and more efficacious, we hasten to receive them without any delay.”

Another of the king’s chief men, approving of his wise words and exhortations, added thereafter: “The present life of man upon earth, O king,

seems to me, in comparison with that time which is unknown to us, like to the swift flight of a sparrow through the house wherein you sit at supper in winter, with your ealdormen and thegns, while the fire blazes in the midst, and the hall is warmed, but the wintry storms of rain or snow are raging abroad. The sparrow, flying in at one door and immediately out at another, whilst he is within, is safe from the wintry tempest; but after a short space of fair weather, he immediately vanishes out of your sight, passing from winter into winter again. So this life of man appears for a little while, but of what is to follow or what went before we know nothing at all. If, therefore, this new doctrine tells us something more certain, it seems justly to deserve to be followed." The other elders and king's counsellors, by Divine prompting, spoke to the same effect.

But Coifi added, that he wished more attentively to hear Paulinus discourse concerning the God Whom he preached. When he did so, at the king's command, Coifi, hearing his words, cried out, "This long time I have perceived that what we worshipped was naught; because the more diligently I sought after truth in that worship, the less I found it. But now I freely confess, that such truth evidently appears in this preaching as can confer on us the gifts of life, of salvation, and of eternal happiness. For which reason my counsel is, O king, that we instantly give up to ban and fire those temples and altars which we have consecrated without reaping any benefit from them." In brief, the king openly assented to the preaching of the Gospel by Paulinus, and renouncing idolatry, declared that he received the faith of Christ: and when he inquired of the aforesaid high priest of his religion, who should first desecrate the altars and temples of their idols, with the precincts that were about them, he answered, "I; for who can more fittingly than myself destroy those things which I worshipped in my folly, for an example to all others, through the wisdom which has been given me by the true God?" Then immediately, in contempt of his vain superstitions, he desired the king to furnish him with arms and a stallion, that he might mount and go forth to destroy the idols; for it was not lawful before for the high priest either to carry arms, or to ride on anything but a mare. Having, therefore, girt a sword about him, with a spear in his hand, he mounted the king's stallion, and went his way to the idols. The multitude, beholding it, thought that he was mad; but as soon as he drew near the temple he did not delay to desecrate it by casting into it the spear which he held; and rejoicing in the knowledge of the worship of the true God, he commanded his companions to tear down and set on fire the temple, with all its precincts. This place where the idols once stood is still shown, not far from York, to the eastward, beyond the river Derwent, and is now called Godmunddingaham, where the high priest, by the inspiration of the true God, profaned and destroyed the altars which he had himself consecrated.

CHAP. 14

Igitur accepit rex Aeduini cum cunctis gentis suae nobilibus ac plebe perplurima fidem et lauacrum sanctae regenerationis anno regni sui XI, qui est annus dominicae incarnationis DCXXVII, ab aduentu uero Anglorum in Britanniam annus circiter CLXXXmus. Baptizatus est autem Eburaci die sancto paschae pridie Iduum Aprilium in ecclesia Petri apostoli, quam ibidem ipse de ligno, cum cathecizaretur, atque ad percipiendum baptismum inbueretur, citato opere construxit. In qua etiam ciuitate ipsi doctores atque antistites suo Paulino sedem episcopatus donauit. Mox autem ut baptismum consecutus est, curauit, docente eodem Paulino, maiorem ipso in loco et augustiorem de lapide fabricare basilicam, in cuius medio ipsum, quod prius fecerat, oratorium includeretur. Praeparatis ergo fundamentis in gyro prioris oratorii per quadrum coepit aedificare basilicam. Sed priusquam altitudo parietis esset consummata, rex ipse impia nece occisus, opus idem successori suo Osualdo perficiendum reliquit. Paulinus autem ex eo tempore sex annis continuis, id est ad finem usque imperii regis illius, uerbum Dei, adnuente ac fauente ipso, in ea prouincia praedicabat; credebantque et baptizabantur quotquot erant praeordinati ad uitam aeternam, in quibus erant Osfrid et Eadfrid filii regis Aeduini, qui ambo ei exuli nati sunt de Quoenburga filia Cearli regis Merciorum.

Baptizati sunt tempore sequente et alii liberi eius de Aedilberga regina progeniti, Aedilhun et Aedilthryd filia, et alter filius Uuscfrea, quorum primi albatii adhuc rapti sunt de hac uita, et Eburaci in ecclesia sepulti. Baptizatus est Yffi filius Osfridi, sed et alii nobiles ac regii uiri non pauci. Tantis autem fertur tunc fuisse feruor fidei ac desiderium lauacri salutaris genti Nordanhymbrorum, ut quodam tempore Paulinus ueniens cum rege et regina in uillam regiam, quae uocatur Adgefrin, XXXVI diebus ibidem cum eis cathecizandi et baptizandi officio deditus moraretur; quibus diebus cunctis a mane usque ad uesperam nil aliud ageret, quam confluentem eo de cunctis uiculis ac locis plebem Christi uerbo salutis instruere, atque instructam in fluuio Gleni, qui proximus erat, lauacro remissionis abluere. Haec uilla tempore sequentium regum deserta, et alia pro illa est facta in loco, qui uocatur Maelmin.

Haec quidem in prouincia Berniciorum; sed et in prouincia Deirorum, ubi saepius manere cum rege solebat, baptizabat in fluuio Sualua, qui uicum Cataractam praeterfluit. Nondum enim oratoria uel baptisteria in ipso exordio nascentis ibi ecclesiae poterant aedificari. Attamen in Campodono, ubi tunc etiam uilla regia erat, fecit basilicam, quam postmodum pagani, a quibus Aeduini rex occisus est, cum tota eadem uilla succenderunt; pro qua reges posteriores fecere sibi uillam in regione, quae uocatur Loidis. Euasit autem ignem altare, quia lapideum erat; et seruatur adhuc in monasterio reuerentissimi abbatis et presbyteri Thryduulfi, quod est in silua Elmete.

How King Edwin and his nation became Christians; and where Paulinus baptized them. [627 a.d.]

King Edwin, therefore, with all the nobility of the nation, and a large number of the common sort, received the faith, and the washing of holy regeneration, in the eleventh year of his reign, which is the year of our Lord 627, and about one hundred and eighty after the coming of the English into Britain. He was baptized at York, on the holy day of Easter, being the 12th of April, in the church of St. Peter the Apostle, which he himself had built of timber there in haste, whilst he was a catechumen receiving instruction in order to be admitted to baptism. In that city also he bestowed upon his instructor and bishop, Paulinus, his episcopal see. But as soon as he was baptized, he set about building, by the direction of Paulinus, in the same place a larger and nobler church of stone, in the midst whereof the oratory which he had first erected should be enclosed. Having, therefore, laid the foundation, he began to build the church square, encompassing the former oratory. But before the walls were raised to their full height, the cruel death of the king left that work to be finished by Oswald his successor. Paulinus, for the space of six years from this time, that is, till the end of the king's reign, with his consent and favour, preached the Word of God in that country, and as many as were foreordained to eternal life believed and were baptized. Among them were Osfrid and Eadfrid, King Edwin's sons who were both born to him, whilst he was in banishment, of Quenburga, the daughter of Cearl, king of the Mercians.

Afterwards other children of his, by Queen Ethelberg, were baptized, Ethelhun and his daughter Ethelthryth, and another, Wuscfrea, a son; the first two were snatched out of this life whilst they were still in the white garments of the newly-baptized, and buried in the church at York. Yffi, the son of Osfrid, was also baptized, and many other noble and royal persons. So great was then the fervour of the faith, as is reported, and the desire for the laver of salvation among the nation of the Northumbrians, that Paulinus at a certain time coming with the king and queen to the royal township, which is called Adgefrin, stayed there with them thirty-six days, fully occupied in catechizing and baptizing; during which days, from morning till night, he did nothing else but instruct the people resorting from all villages and places, in Christ's saving Word; and when they were instructed, he washed them with the water of absolution in the river Glen, which is close by. This township, under the following kings, was abandoned, and another was built instead of it, at the place called Maelmin.

These things happened in the province of the Bernicians; but in that of the Deiri also, where he was wont often to be with the king, he baptized in the river Swale, which runs by the village of Cataract; for as yet oratories, or

baptisteries, could not be built in the early infancy of the Church in those parts. But in Campodonum, where there was then a royal township, he built a church which the pagans, by whom King Edwin was slain, afterwards burnt, together with all the place. Instead of this royal seat the later kings built themselves a township in the country called Loidis. But the altar, being of stone, escaped the fire and is still preserved in the monastery of the most reverend abbot and priest, Thrydwulf, which is in the forest of Elmet.

CHAP. 15

Tantum autem deuotionis Æduini erga cultum ueritatis habuit, ut etiam regi Orientalium Anglorum, Earpualdo filio Redualdi, persuaderet, relictis idolorum superstitionibus, fidem et sacramenta Christi cum sua prouincia suscipere. Et quidem pater eius Reduald iamdudum in Cantia sacramentis Christianae fidei inbutus est, sed frustra; nam rediens domum ab uxore sua et quibusdam peruersis doctoribus seductus est, atque a sinceritate fidei deprauatus habuit posteriora peiora prioribus; ita ut in morem antiquorum Samaritanorum et Christo seruire uideretur et diis, quibus antea seruiebat; atque in eodem fano et altare haberet ad sacrificium Christi, et arulam ad uictimas daemoniorum. Quod uidelicet fanum rex eiusdem prouinciae Alduulf, qui nostra aetate fuit, usque ad suum tempus perdurasse, et se in pueritia uidisse testabatur.

Erat autem praefatus rex Reduald natus nobilis, quamlibet actu ignobilis, filius Tytili, cuius pater fuit Uuffa, a quo reges Orientalium Anglorum Uuffingas appellant.

Uerum Eorpuald non multo, postquam fidem accepit, tempore occisus est a uiro gentili nomine Ricbercto; et exinde tribus annis prouincia in errore uersata est, donec accepit regnum frater eiusdem Eorpualdi Sigberct, uir per omnia Christianissimus ac doctissimus, qui, uiuente adhuc fratre, cum exularet in Gallia, fidei sacramentis inbutus est, quorum participem, mox ubi regnare coepit, totam suam prouinciam facere curauit. Cuius studiis gloriosissime fauit Felix episcopus, qui de Burgundiorum partibus, ubi ortus et ordinatus est, cum uenisset ad Honorium archiepiscopum, eique indicasset desiderium suum, misit eum ad praedicandum uerbum uitae praefatae nationi Anglorum. Nec uota ipsius in cassum cecidere; quin potius fructum in ea multiplicem credentium populorum pius agri spiritalis cultor inuenit. Siquidem totam illam prouinciam, iuxta sui nominis sacramentum, a longa iniquitate atque infelicitate liberatam, ad fidem et opera iustitiae, ac perpetuae felicitatis dona perduxit, accepitque sedem episcopatus in ciuitate Domnoc; et cum X ac VII annos eidem prouinciae pontificali regimine praecesset, ibidem in pace uitam finiuit.

Chap. XV.

How the province of the East Angles received the faith of Christ. [627-628 a.d.]

Edwin was so zealous for the true worship, that he likewise persuaded Earpwald, king of the East Angles, and son of Redwald, to abandon his idolatrous superstitions, and with his whole province to receive the faith and mysteries of Christ. And indeed his father Redwald had long before been initiated into the mysteries of the Christian faith in Kent, but in vain; for on

his return home, he was seduced by his wife and certain perverse teachers, and turned aside from the sincerity of the faith; and thus his latter state was worse than the former; so that, like the Samaritans of old, he seemed at the same time to serve Christ and the gods whom he served before; and in the same temple he had an altar for the Christian Sacrifice, and another small one at which to offer victims to devils. Aldwulf, king of that same province, who lived in our time, testifies that this temple had stood until his time, and that he had seen it when he was a boy. The aforesaid King Redwald was noble by birth, though ignoble in his actions, being the son of Tytilus, whose father was Uuffa, from whom the kings of the East Angles are called Uuffings.

Earpwald, not long after he had embraced the Christian faith, was slain by one Ricbert, a pagan; and from that time the province was in error for three years, till Sigbert succeeded to the kingdom, brother to the same Earpwald, a most Christian and learned man, who was banished, and went to live in Gaul during his brother's life, and was there initiated into the mysteries of the faith, whereof he made it his business to cause all his province to partake as soon as he came to the throne. His exertions were nobly promoted by Bishop Felix, who, coming to Honorius, the archbishop, from the parts of Burgundy, where he had been born and ordained, and having told him what he desired, was sent by him to preach the Word of life to the aforesaid nation of the Angles. Nor were his good wishes in vain; for the pious labourer in the spiritual field reaped therein a great harvest of believers, delivering all that province (according to the inner signification of his name) from long iniquity and unhappiness, and bringing it to the faith and works of righteousness, and the gifts of everlasting happiness. He had the see of his bishopric appointed him in the city Dommoc, and having presided over the same province with pontifical authority seventeen years, he ended his days there in peace.

CHAP. 16

Preadicabat autem Paulinus uerbum etiam prouinciae Lindissi, quae est prima ad meridianam Humbre fluminis ripam, pertingens usque ad mare, praefectumque Lindocolinae ciuitatis, cui nomen erat Blaecca, primum cum domu sua conuertit ad Dominum. In qua uidelicet ciuitate et ecclesiam operis egregii de lapide fecit; cuius tecto uel longa incuria, uel hostili manu deiecto, parietes hactenus stare uidentur, et omnibus annis aliqua sanitatum miracula in eodem loco solent ad utilitatem eorum, qui fideliter quaerunt, ostendi. In qua ecclesia Paulinus, transeunte ad Christum Iusto, Honorium pro eo consecrauit episcopum, ut in sequentibus suo loco dicemus.

De huius fide prouinciae narrauit mihi presbyter et abbas quidam uir ueracissimus de monasterio Peartaneu, uocabulo Deda, retulisse sibi quendam seniore, baptizatum se fuisse die media a Paulino episcopo, praesente rege atduino, et multam populi turbam in fluuio Treenta, iuxta ciuitatem, quae lingua Anglorum Tiouulfingacastir uocatur; qui etiam effigiem eiusdem Paulini referre esset solitus, quod esset uir longae staturae, paululum incuruus, nigro capillo, facie macilenta, naso adunco pertenui, uenerabilis simul et terribilis aspectu.

Habuit autem secum in ministerio et Iacobum diaconum, uirum utique industrium ac nobilem in Christo et in ecclesia, qui ad nostra usque tempora permansit.

Tanta autem eo tempore pax in Brittainia, quaquauersum imperium regis arduini peruenerat, fuisse perhibetur, ut, sicut usque hodie in prouerbio dicitur, etiam si mulier una cum recens nato paruulo uellet totam perambulare insulam a mari ad mare, nullo se ledente ualeret. Tantum rex idem utilitati suae gentis consuluit, ut plerisque in locis, ubi fontes lucidos iuxta puplicos uiarum transitus conspexit, ibi ob refrigerium uiantium, erectis stipitibus, aereos caucos suspendi iuberet, neque hos quisquam, nisi ad usum necessarium, contingere prae magnitudine uel timoris eius auderet, uel amoris uellet. Tantum uero in regno excellentiae habuit, ut non solum in pugna ante illum uexilla gestarentur, sed et tempore pacis equitantem inter ciuitates siue uillas aut prouincias suas cum ministris, semper antecedere signifer consuisset; nec non et incedente illo ubilibet per plateas, illud genus uexilli, quod Romani tufam, Angli appellant thuuf, ante eum ferri solebat.

Chap. XVI.

How Paulinus preached in the province of Lindsey; and of the character of the reign of Edwin. [Circ. 628 a.d.]

Paulinus also preached the Word to the province of Lindsey, which is the first on the south side of the river Humber, stretching as far as the sea; and he first

converted to the Lord the reeve of the city of Lincoln, whose name was Blaecca, with his whole house. He likewise built, in that city, a stone church of beautiful workmanship; the roof of which has either fallen through long neglect, or been thrown down by enemies, but the walls are still to be seen standing, and every year miraculous cures are wrought in that place, for the benefit of those who have faith to seek them. In that church, when Justus had departed to Christ, Paulinus consecrated Honorius bishop in his stead, as will be hereafter mentioned in its proper place. A certain priest and abbot of the monastery of Peartaneu, a man of singular veracity, whose name was Deda, told me concerning the faith of this province that an old man had informed him that he himself had been baptized at noon-day, by Bishop Paulinus, in the presence of King Edwin, and with him a great multitude of the people, in the river Trent, near the city, which in the English tongue is called Tiouulfingacaestir; and he was also wont to describe the person of the same Paulinus, saying that he was tall of stature, stooping somewhat, his hair black, his visage thin, his nose slender and aquiline, his aspect both venerable and awe-inspiring. He had also with him in the ministry, James, the deacon, a man of zeal and great fame in Christ and in the church, who lived even to our days.

It is told that there was then such perfect peace in Britain, wheresoever the dominion of King Edwin extended, that, as is still proverbially said, a woman with her new-born babe might walk throughout the island, from sea to sea, without receiving any harm. That king took such care for the good of his nation, that in several places where he had seen clear springs near the highways, he caused stakes to be fixed, with copper drinking-vessels hanging on them, for the refreshment of travellers; nor durst any man touch them for any other purpose than that for which they were designed, either through the great dread they had of the king, or for the affection which they bore him. His dignity was so great throughout his dominions, that not only were his banners borne before him in battle, but even in time of peace, when he rode about his cities, townships, or provinces, with his thegns, the standard-bearer was always wont to go before him. Also, when he walked anywhere along the streets, that sort of banner which the Romans call Tufa, and the English, Thuuf, was in like manner borne before him.

CHAP. 17

Quo tempore praesulatum sedis apostolicae Honorius Bonifatii successor habebat, qui, ubi gentem Nordanhymbrorum cum suo rege ad fidem confessionemque Christi, Paulino euangelizante, conuersam esse didicit, misit eidem Paulino pallium; misit et regi atduino litteras exhortatorias, paterna illum caritate accendens, ut in fide ueritatis, quam acceperant, persistere semper ac proficere curarent.

Quarum uidelicet litterarum iste est ordo:

Domino excellentissimo atque praecellentissimo filio atduino regi Anglorum Honorius episcopus seruus seruorum Dei salutem.

Ita Christianitatis uestrae integritas circa sui conditoris cultum fidei est ardore succensa, ut longe lateque resplendeat, et in omni mundo adnuntiata uestri operis multipliciter referat fructum. Sic enim uos reges esse cognoscitis, dum regem et Creatorem uestrum orthodoxa praedicatione cdocti Deum uenerando creditis, eique, quod humana ualet condicio, mentis uestrae sinceram deuotionem exsoluitis. Quod enim Deo nostro aliud offerre ualebimus, nisi ut in bonis actibus persistentes, ipsumque auctorem humani generis confitentes, eum colere, eique uota nostra reddere festinemus? Et ideo, excellentissime fili, paterna uos caritate, qua conuenit, exhortamur, ut hoc, quod uos diuina misericordia ad suam gratiam uocare dignata est, sollicita intentione et adsiduis orationibus seruare omnimodo festinetis; ut, qui uos in praesenti saeculo ex omni errore absolutos ad agnitionem sui nominis est dignatus perducere, et caelestis patriae uobis praeparet mansionem.

Praedicatoris igitur uestri domini mei apostolicae memoriae Gregorii frequenter lectione occupati, prae oculis affectum doctrinae ipsius, quem pro uestris animabus libenter exercuit, habetote; quatinus eius oratio et regnum uestrum populumque augeat, et uos omnipotenti Deo inreprehensibiles repraesentet. Ea uero, quae a nobis pro uestris sacerdotibus ordinanda sperastis, haec pro fidei uestrae sinceritate, quae nobis multimoda relatione per praesentium portitores laudabiliter insinuata est, gratuito animo adtribuere ulla sine dilatione praeuidemus; et duo pallia utrorumque metropolitanorum, id est Honorio et Paulino, direximus, ut, dum quis eorum de hoc saeculo ad auctorem suum fuerit arcessitus, in loco ipsius alter episcopum ex hac nostra auctoritate debeat subrogare.

Quod quidem tam pro uestrae caritatis affectu, quam pro tantarum prouinciarum spatiis, quae inter nos et uos esse noscuntur, sumus inuitati concedere, ut in omnibus deuotioni uestrae nostrum concursum, et iuxta uestra desideria praeberemus.

Incolumem excellentiam uestram gratia superna custodiat.

How Edwin received letters of exhortation from Pope Honorius, who also sent the pall to Paulinus. [634 a.d.]

At that time Honorius, successor to Boniface, was Bishop of the Apostolic see. When he learned that the nation of the Northumbrians, with their king, had been, by the preaching of Paulinus, converted to the faith and confession of Christ, he sent the pall to the said Paulinus, and with it letters of exhortation to King Edwin, with fatherly love inflaming his zeal, to the end that he and his people should persist in belief of the truth which they had received. The contents of which letter were as follow:

“To his most noble son, and excellent lord, Edwin king of the Angles, Bishop Honorius, servant of the servants of God, greeting. The wholeheartedness of your Christian Majesty, in the worship of your Creator, is so inflamed with the fire of faith, that it shines out far and wide, and, being reported throughout the world, brings forth plentiful fruits of your labours. For the terms of your kingship you know to be this, that taught by orthodox preaching the knowledge of your King and Creator, you believe and worship God, and as far as man is able, pay Him the sincere devotion of your mind. For what else are we able to offer to our God, but our readiness to worship Him and to pay Him our vows, persisting in good actions, and confessing Him the Creator of mankind? And, therefore, most excellent son, we exhort you with such fatherly love as is meet, to labour to preserve this gift in every way, by earnest striving and constant prayer, in that the Divine Mercy has vouchsafed to call you to His grace; to the end that He, Who has been pleased to deliver you from all errors, and bring you to the knowledge of His name in this present world, may likewise prepare a place for you in the heavenly country. Employing yourself, therefore, in reading frequently the works of my lord Gregory, your Evangelist, of apostolic memory, keep before your eyes that love of his doctrine, which he zealously bestowed for the sake of your souls; that his prayers may exalt your kingdom and people, and present you faultless before Almighty God. We are preparing with a willing mind immediately to grant those things which you hoped would be by us ordained for your bishops, and this we do on account of the sincerity of your faith, which has been made known to us abundantly in terms of praise by the bearers of these presents. We have sent two palls to the two metropolitans, Honorius and Paulinus; to the intent, that when either of them shall be called out of this world to his Creator, the other may, by this authority of ours, substitute another bishop in his place; which privilege we are induced to grant by the warmth of our love for you, as well as by reason of the great extent of the provinces which lie between us and you; that we may in all things support your devotion and likewise satisfy your desires. May God’s grace preserve your Highness in safety!”

CHAP. 18

Haec inter Iustus archiepiscopus ad caelestia regna subleuatus quarto Iduum Nouembrium die, et Honorius pro illo est in praesulatum electus; qui ordinandus uenit ad Paulinum, et occurrente sibi illo in Lindocolino, quintus ab Augustino Doruuernensis ecclesiae consecratus est antistes. Cui etiam praefatus papa Honorius misit pallium et litteras, in quibus decernit hoc ipsum, quod in epistula ad Aeduinum regem missa decreuerat; scilicet ut cum Doruuernensis uel Eburacensis antistes de hac uita transierit, is, qui superest, consors eiusdem gradus habeat potestatem alterum ordinandi in loco eius, qui transierat, sacerdotem; ne sit necesse ad Romanam usque ciuitatem per tam prolixa terrarum et maris spatia pro ordinando archiepiscopo sempor fatigari. Quarum etiam textum litterarum in nostra hac historia ponere commodum duximus.

Dilectissimo fratri Honorio Honorius.

Inter plurima, quae Redemptoris nostri misericordia suis famulis dignatur bonorum munera praerogare, illud etiam clementer conlata suae pietatis munificentia tribuit, quoties per fraternos affatus unianimam dilectionem quadam contemplatione alternis aspectibus repraesentat. Pro quibus maiestati eius gratias indesinenter exsoluimus, eumque uotis supplicibus exoramus, ut uestram dilectionem in praedicatione euangelii elaborantem et fructificantem, sectantemque magistri et capitis sui sancti Gregorii regulam, perpeti stabilitate confirmet, et ad augmentum ecclesiae suae potiora per uos suscitet incrementa; ut fide et opere, in timore Dei et caritate, uestra acquisitio decessorumque uestrorum, quae per domini Gregorii exordia pullulat, conualescendo amplius extendatur; ut ipsa uos dominici eloquii promissa in futuro respiciant, uosque uox ista ad aeternam festiuitatem euocet: ‘Uenite ad me omnes, qui laboratis et onerati estis, et ego reficiam uos;’

et iterum: ‘Euge, serue bone et fidelis; quia super pauca fuisti fidelis, super multa te constituam; intra in gaudium Domini tui.’ Et nos equidem, fratres carissimi, haec uobis pro aeterna caritate exhortationis uerba praemittentes, quae rursus pro ecclesiarum uestrarum priuilegiis congruere posse conspiciamus, non desistimus inperire.

Et tam iuxta uestram petitionem, quam filiorum nostrorum regum uobis per praesentem nostram praeceptionem, uice beati Petri apostolorum principis, auctoritatem tribuimus, ut quando unum ex uobis diuina ad se iusserit gratia euocari, is, qui superstes fuerit, alterum in loco defuncti debeat episcopum ordinare. Pro qua etiam re singula uestrae dilectioni pallia pro eadem ordinatione celebranda direximus, ut per nostrae praeceptionis auctoritatem possitis Deo placitam ordinationem efficere; quia, ut haec uobis concederemus, longa terrarum marisque interualla, quae inter nos ac uos obsistunt, ad haec nos condescendere coegerunt, ut nulla possit ecclesiarum

uestrarum iactura per cuiuslibet occasionis obtentum quoquo modo prouenire; sed potius commissi uobis populi deuotionem plenius propagare Deus te incolumem custodiat, dilectissime frater.

Data die III Iduum Iunii, imperantibus dominis nostris Augustis, Heraclio anno XXoIIIo, post consulatum eiusdem anno XXoIIIo, atque Constantino filio ipsius anno uicesimo tertio, et consulatus eius anno IIIo; sed et Heraclio felicissimo Caesare id est filio eius anno III, indictione VII, id est anno dominicae incarnationis DCXXXIII.

Chap. XVIII.

How Honorius, who succeeded Justus in the bishopric of Canterbury, received the pall and letters from Pope Honorius. [634 a.d.]

In the meantime, Archbishop Justus was taken up to the heavenly kingdom, on the 10th of November, and Honorius, who was elected to the see in his stead, came to Paulinus to be ordained, and meeting him at Lincoln was there consecrated the fifth prelate of the Church of Canterbury from Augustine. To him also the aforesaid Pope Honorius sent the pall, and a letter, wherein he ordains the same that he had before ordained in his epistle to King Edwin, to wit, that when either the Archbishop of Canterbury or of York shall depart this life, the survivor, being of the same degree, shall have power to ordain another bishop in the room of him that is departed; that it might not be necessary always to undertake the toilsome journey to Rome, at so great a distance by sea and land, to ordain an archbishop. Which letter we have also thought fit to insert in this our history:

“Honorius to his most beloved brother Honorius: Among the many good gifts which the mercy of our Redeemer is pleased to bestow on His servants He grants to us in His bounty, graciously conferred on us by His goodness, the special blessing of realizing by brotherly intercourse, as it were face to face, our mutual love. For which gift we continually render thanks to His Majesty; and we humbly beseech Him, that He will ever confirm your labour, beloved, in preaching the Gospel, and bringing forth fruit, and following the rule of your master and head, the holy Gregory; and that, for the advancement of His Church, He may by your means raise up further increase; to the end, that through faith and works, in the fear and love of God, what you and your predecessors have already gained from the seed sown by our lord Gregory, may grow strong and be further extended; that so the promises spoken by our Lord may hereafter be brought to pass in you; and that these words may summon you to everlasting happiness: ‘Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you.’ And again, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.’ And we, most beloved brothers, sending you first these words of exhortation out of our

enduring charity, do not fail further to grant those things which we perceive may be suitable for the privileges of your Churches.

“Wherefore, in accordance with your request, and that of the kings our sons, we do hereby in the name of the blessed Peter, chief of the Apostles, grant you authority, that when the Divine Grace shall call either of you to Himself, the survivor shall ordain a bishop in the room of him that is deceased. To which end also we have sent a pall to each of you, beloved, for celebrating the said ordination; that by the authority which we hereby commit to you, you may make an ordination acceptable to God; because the long distance of sea and land that lies between us and you, has obliged us to grant you this, that no loss may happen to your Church in any way, on any pretext whatever, but that the devotion of the people committed to you may increase the more. God preserve you in safety, most dear brother! Given the 11th day of June, in the reign of these our lords and emperors, in the twenty-fourth year of the reign of Heraclius, and the twenty-third after his consulship; and in the twenty-third of his son Constantine, and the third after his consulship; and in the third year of the most prosperous Caesar, his son Heraclius, the seventh indiction; that is, in the year of our Lord, 634.”

CHAP. 19

Misit idem papa Honorius litteras etiam genti Scottorum, quos in obseruatione sancti paschae errasse conpererat, iuxta quod supra docuimus; sollerter exhortans, ne paucitatem suam in extremis terrae finibus constitutam, sapientiore antiquis siue modernis, quae per orbem erant, Christi ecclesiis aestimarent; neue contra paschales computos, et decreta synodaliū totius orbis pontificum aliud pascha celebrarent.

Sed et Iohannes, qui successori eiusdem Honorii Seuerino successit, cum adhuc esset electus in pontificatum, pro eodem errore corrigendo litteras eis magna auctoritate atque eruditione plenas direxit;

euidenter astruens, quia dominicum paschae diem a XVa luna usque ad XXIam, quod in Nicena synodo probatum est, oportet inquiri. Necnon pro Pelagiana heresi, quam apud eos reuiuiscere didicerat, cauenda ac repellenda, in eadem illos epistula admonere curauit; cuius epistolae principium est:

Dilectissimis et sanctissimis Tomiano, Columbano, Cromano, Dinnao, et Baithano episcopis; Cromano, Ernianoque, Laistrano, Scellano, et Segeno presbyteris; Sarano ceterisque doctoribus seu abbatibus Scottis, Hilarus archipresbyter et seruans locum sanctae sedis apostolicae, Iohannes diaconus et in Dei nomine electus; item Iohannes primicerius et seruans locum sanctae sedis apostolicae, et Iohannes seruus Dei, consiliarius eiusdem apostolicae sedis.

Scripta, quae perlatores ad sanctae memoriae Seuerinum papam adduxerunt, eo de hac luce migrante, reciproca responsa ad ea, quae postulata fuerant, siluerunt. Quibus reseratis, ne diu tantae quaestionis caligo indiscussa remaneret, repperimus quosdam prouinciae uestrae contra orthodoxam fidem, nouam ex ueteri heresim renouare conantes, pascha nostrum, in quo immolatus est Christus, nebula caligine refutantes, et XIII luna cum Hebreis celebrare nitentes.

Quo epistolae principio manifeste declaratur, et nuperrime temporibus illis hanc apud eos heresim exortam, et non totam eorum gentem, sed quosdam in eis hac fuisse implicitos.

Exposita autem ratione paschalis obseruantiae, ita de Pelagianis in eadem epistula subdunt:

Et hoc quoque cognouimus, quod uirus Pelagianae hereseos apud uos denuo reuiuiscit; quod omnino hortamur, ut a uestris mentibus huiusmodi uenenatum superstitionis facinus auferatur. Nam qualiter ipsa quoque execranda heresis damnata est, latere uos non debet;

quia non solum per istos CC annos abolita est, sed et cotidie a nobis perpetuo anathemate sepulta damnatur; et hortamur, ne, quorum arma

combusta sunt, apud uos eorum cineres suscitentur. Nam quis non execretur superbum eorum conamen et impium, dicentium posse sine peccato hominem existere ex propria uoluntate, et non ex gratia Dei?

Et primum quidem blasphemiae stultiloquium est dicere esse hominem sine peccato; quod omnino non potest, nisi unus mediator Dei et hominum homo Christus Iesus, qui sine peccato est conceptus et partus. Nam ceteri homines cum peccato originali nascentes testimonium praeuaricationis Adae, etiam sine actuali peccato existentes, portare noscuntur, secundum prophetam dicentem: ‘Ecce enim in iniquitatibus conceptus sum, et in peccatis peperit me mater mea.’

Chap. XIX.

How the aforesaid Honorius first, and afterwards John, wrote letters to the nation of the Scots, concerning the observance of Easter, and the Pelagian heresy. [640 a.d.]

The same Pope Honorius also wrote to the Scots, whom he had found to err in the observance of the holy Festival of Easter, as has been shown above, with subtlety of argument exhorting them not to think themselves, few as they were, and placed in the utmost borders of the earth, wiser than all the ancient and modern Churches of Christ, throughout the world; and not to celebrate a different Easter, contrary to the Paschal calculation and the decrees of all the bishops upon earth sitting in synod. Likewise John, who succeeded Severinus, successor to the same Honorius, being yet but Pope elect, sent to them letters of great authority and erudition for the purpose of correcting the same error; evidently showing, that Easter Sunday is to be found between the fifteenth of the moon and the twenty-first, as was approved in the Council of Nicaea. He also in the same epistle admonished them to guard against the Pelagian heresy, and reject it, for he had been informed that it was again springing up among them. The beginning of the epistle was as follows:

“To our most beloved and most holy Tomianus, Columbanus, Cromanus, Dinnaus, and Baithanus, bishops; to Cromanus, Ernianus, Laistranus, Scellanus, and Segenus, priests; to Saranus and the rest of the Scottish doctors and abbots, Hilarus, the arch-presbyter, and vice-gerent of the holy Apostolic See; John, the deacon, and elect in the name of God; likewise John, the chief of the notaries and vice-gerent of the holy Apostolic See, and John, the servant of God, and counsellor of the same Apostolic See. The writings which were brought by the bearers to Pope Severinus, of holy memory, were left, when he departed from the light of this world, without an answer to the questions contained in them. Lest any obscurity should long remain undisputed in a matter of so great moment, we opened the same, and found that some in your province, endeavouring to revive a new heresy out of an old one, contrary to the orthodox faith, do through the darkness of their minds

reject our Easter, when Christ was sacrificed; and contend that the same should be kept with the Hebrews on the fourteenth of the moon.”

By this beginning of the epistle it evidently appears that this heresy arose among them in very late times, and that not all their nation, but only some of them, were involved in the same.

After having laid down the manner of keeping Easter, they add this concerning the Pelagians in the same epistle:

“And we have also learnt that the poison of the Pelagian heresy again springs up among you; we, therefore, exhort you, that you put away from your thoughts all such venomous and superstitious wickedness. For you cannot be ignorant how that execrable heresy has been condemned; for it has not only been abolished these two hundred years, but it is also daily condemned by us and buried under our perpetual ban; and we exhort you not to rake up the ashes of those whose weapons have been burnt. For who would not detest that insolent and impious assertion, ‘That man can live without sin of his own free will, and not through the grace of God?’ And in the first place, it is blasphemous folly to say that man is without sin, which none can be, but only the one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, Who was conceived and born without sin; for all other men, being born in original sin, are known to bear the mark of Adam’s transgression, even whilst they are without actual sin, according to the saying of the prophet, ‘For behold, I was conceived in iniquity; and in sin did my mother give birth to me.’”

CHAP. 20

At uero Aeduini cum X et VII annis genti Anglorum simul et Brettonum gloriosissime praeesset, e quibus sex etiam ipse, ut diximus, Christi regno militauit, rebellauit aduersus eum Caedualla rex Brettonum, auxilium praebente illi Penda uiro strenuissimo de regio genere Merciorum, qui et ipse ex eo tempore gentis eiusdem regno annis XX et Ilbus uaria sorte praefuit; et conserto graui proelio in campo, qui uocatur Haethfelth, occisus est atduini die IIII Iduum Octobrium, anno dominicae incarnationis DCXXXIII, cum esset annorum XL et VIII; eiusque totus uel interemtus uel dispersus est exercitus. In quo etiam bello ante illum unus filius eius Osfrid iuuenis bellicosus cecidit, alter Eadfrid necessitate cogente ad Pendam regem transfugit, et ab eo postmodum, regnante Osualdo, contra fidem iuris iurandi peremtus est.

Quo tempore maxima est facta strages in ecclesia uel gente Nordanhymbrorum, maxime quod unus ex ducibus, a quibus acta est, paganus, alter, quia barbarus erat pagano saeuior. Siquidem Penda cum omni Merciorum gente idolis deditus, et Christiani erat nominis ignarus; at uero Caedualla, quamuis nomen et professionem haberet Christiani, adeo tamen erat animo ac moribus barbarus, ut ne sexui quidem muliebri, uel innocuae paruulorum parceret aetati, quin uniuersos atrocitate ferina morti per tormenta contraderet, multo tempore totas eorum prouincias debacchando peruagatus, ac totum genus Anglorum Britanniae finibus erasurum se esse deliberans. Sed nec religioni Christianae, quae apud eos exorta erat, aliquid inpendebat honoris. Quippe cum usque hodie moris sit Brettonum, fidem religionemque Anglorum pro nihil habere, neque in aliquo eis magis communicare quam paganis. Adlatum est autem caput Aeduini regis Eburacum, et inlatum postea in ecclesiam beati apostoli Petri, quam ipse coepit, sed successor eius Osuald perfecit, ut supra docuimus, positum est in porticu sancti papae Gregorii, a cuius ipse discipulis uerbum uitae susceperat.

Turbatis itaque rebus Nordanhymbrorum huius articulo cladis, cum nil alicubi praesidii nisi in fuga esse uideretur, Paulinus adsumta secum regina Aedilberge, quam pridem adduxerat, rediit Cantiam nauigio, atque ab Honorio archiepiscopo et rege Eadbaldo multum honorifice susceptus est. Uenit autem illuc duce Basso milite regis Aduini fortissimo, habens secum Eanfledam filiam, et Uuscfrean filium atduini, nec non et Yffi filium Osfridi filii eius, quos postea mater metu Eadbaldi et Osualdi regum misit in Galliam nutriendos regi Daegberecto, qui erat amicus illius, ibique ambo in infantia defuncti, et iuxta honorem uel regiis pueris uel innocentibus Christi congruum in ecclesia sepulti sunt. Attulit quoque secum uasa pretiosa Aeduini regis perplura, in quibus et crucem magnam auream, et calicem aureum consecratum ad ministerium altaris, quae hactenus in ecclesia Cantiae conseruata monstrantur.

Quo in tempore Hrofensis ecclesia pastorem minime habebat, eo quod Romanus praesul illius ad Honorium papam a Iusto archiepiscopo legatarius missus absortus fuerat fluctibus Italici maris; ac per hoc curam illius praefatus Paulinus inuitatione Honorii antistitis et Eadbaldi regis suscepit ac tenuit, usque dum et ipse suo tempore ad caelestia regna cum gloriosi fructu laboris ascendit. In qua ecclesia moriens pallium quoque, quod a Romano papa acceperat, reliquit.

Reliquerat autem in ecclesia sua Eburaci Iacobum diaconum, uirum utique ecclesiasticum et sanctum, qui multo exhinc tempore in ecclesia manens, magnas antiquo hosti praedas docendo et baptizando eripuit; cuius nomine uicus, in quo maxime solebat habitare, iuxta Cataractam, usque hodie cognominatur. Qui, quoniam cantandi in ecclesia erat peritissimus, recuperata postmodum pacein prouincia, et crescente numero fidelium, etiam magister ecclesiasticae cantionis iuxta morem Romanorum siue Cantuariorum multis coepit existere; et ipse senex ac plenus dierum, iuxta scripturas, patrum uiam secutus est.

Chap. XX.

How Edwin being slain, Paulinus returned into Kent, and had the bishopric of Rochester conferred upon him. [633 a.d.]

Edwin reigned most gloriously seventeen years over the nations of the English and the Britons, six whereof, as has been said, he also was a soldier in the kingdom of Christ. Caedwalla, king of the Britons, rebelled against him, being supported by the vigorous Penda, of the royal race of the Mercians, who from that time governed that nation for twenty-two years with varying success. A great battle being fought in the plain that is called Haethfelth, Edwin was killed on the 12th of October, in the year of our Lord 633, being then forty-eight years of age, and all his army was either slain or dispersed. In the same war also, Osfrid, one of his sons, a warlike youth, fell before him; Eadfrid, another of them, compelled by necessity, went over to King Penda, and was by him afterwards slain in the reign of Oswald, contrary to his oath. At this time a great slaughter was made in the Church and nation of the Northumbrians; chiefly because one of the chiefs, by whom it was carried on, was a pagan, and the other a barbarian, more cruel than a pagan; for Penda, with all the nation of the Mercians, was an idolater, and a stranger to the name of Christ; but Caedwalla, though he professed and called himself a Christian, was so barbarous in his disposition and manner of living, that he did not even spare women and innocent children, but with bestial cruelty put all alike to death by torture, and overran all their country in his fury for a long time, intending to cut off all the race of the English within the borders of Britain. Nor did he pay any respect to the Christian religion which had sprung up among them; it being to this day the custom of the Britons to despise the faith

and religion of the English, and to have no part with them in anything any more than with pagans. King Edwin's head was brought to York, and afterwards taken into the church of the blessed Peter the Apostle, which he had begun, but which his successor Oswald finished, as has been said before. It was laid in the chapel of the holy Pope Gregory, from whose disciples he had received the word of life.

The affairs of the Northumbrians being thrown into confusion at the moment of this disaster, when there seemed to be no prospect of safety except in flight, Paulinus, taking with him Queen Ethelberg, whom he had before brought thither, returned into Kent by sea, and was very honourably received by the Archbishop Honorius and King Eadbald. He came thither under the conduct of Bassus, a most valiant thegn of King Edwin, having with him Eanfled, the daughter, and Wuscfrea, the son of Edwin, as well as Yffi, the son of Osfrid, Edwin's son. Afterwards Ethelberg, for fear of the kings Eadbald and Oswald, sent Wuscfrea and Yffi over into Gaul to be bred up by King Dagobert, who was her friend; and there they both died in infancy, and were buried in the church with the honour due to royal children and to Christ's innocents. He also brought with him many rich goods of King Edwin, among which were a large gold cross, and a golden chalice, consecrated to the service of the altar, which are still preserved, and shown in the church of Canterbury.

At that time the church of Rochester had no pastor, for Romanus, the bishop thereof, being sent on a mission to Pope Honorius by Archbishop Justus, was drowned in the Italian Sea; and thus Paulinus, at the request of Archbishop Honorius and King Eadbald, took upon him the charge of the same, and held it until he too, in his own time, departed to heaven, with the fruits of his glorious labours; and, dying in that Church, he left there the pall which he had received from the Pope of Rome. He had left behind him in his Church at York, James, the deacon, a true churchman and a holy man, who continuing long after in that Church, by teaching and baptizing, rescued much prey from the ancient enemy; and from him the village, where he chiefly dwelt, near Cataract, has its name to this day. He had great skill in singing in church, and when the province was afterwards restored to peace, and the number of the faithful increased, he began to teach church music to many, according to the custom of the Romans, or of the Cantuarians. And being old and full of days, as the Scripture says, he went the way of his fathers.

LIBER TERTIUS — BOOK III

CHAP. 1

At interfecto in pugna Aduino, suscepit pro illo regnum Deirorum, de qua prouincia ille generis prosapiam et primordia regni habuerat, filius patruī eius Aelfrici, uocabulo Osric, qui ad praedicationem Paulini fidei erat sacramentis inbutus. Porro regnum Berniciorum, nam in has duas prouincias gens Nordanhymbrorum antiquitus diuisa erat, suscepit filius Aedilfridi, qui de illa prouincia generis et regni originem duxerat, nomine Eanfrid. Siquidem tempore toto, quo regnauit Aduini, filii praefati regis Aedilfridi, qui ante illum regnauerat, cum magna nobilium iuuentute apud Scottos siue Pictos exulabant, ibique ad doctrinam Scottorum cathecizati, et baptismatis sunt gratia recreati. Qui ut, mortuo rege inimico, patriam sunt redire permissi, accepit primus eorum, quem diximus, Eanfrid regnum Berniciorum. Qui uterque rex, ut terreni regni infulas sortitus est, sacramenta regni caelestis, quibus initiatus erat, anathematizando prodidit, ac se priscis idolatriae sordibus polluumdum perdendumque restituit.

Nec mora, utrumque rex Brettonum Ceadualla impia manu, sed iusta ultione peremit. Et primo quidem proxima aestate Osricum, dum se in oppido municipio temerarie obsedisset, erumpens subito cum suis omnibus inparatum cum toto exercitu deleuit. Dein cum anno integro prouincias Nordanhymbrorum, non ut rex uictor possideret, sed quasi tyrannus saeuens disperderet, ac tragica caede dilaceraret, tandem Eanfridum inconsulte ad se cum XII lectis militibus postulandae pacis gratia uenientem, simili sorte damnauit. Infaustus ille annus, et omnibus bonis exosus usque hodie permanet, tam propter apostasiam regum Anglorum, qua se fidei sacramentis exuerant, quam propter uesanam Brettonici regis tyrannidem. Unde cunctis placuit regum tempora computantibus, ut, ablata de medio regum perfidorum memoria, idem annus sequentis regis, id est Osualdi, uiri Deo dilecti, regno adsignaretur; quo, post occisionem fratris Eanfridi, superueniente cum paruo exercitu, sed fide Christi munito, infandus Brettonum dux cum inmensis illis copiis, quibus nihil resistere posse iactabat, interemtus est in loco, qui lingua Anglorum Denisesburna, id est riuus Denisi, uocatur.

Chap. I.

How King Edwin's next successors lost both the faith of their nation and the kingdom; but the most Christian King Oswald retrieved both. [633 a.d.]

Edwin being slain in battle, the kingdom of the Deiri, to which province his family belonged, and where he first began to reign, passed to Osric, the son of his uncle Aelfric, who, through the preaching of Paulinus, had also received the mysteries of the faith. But the kingdom of the Bernicians — for into these two provinces the nation of the Northumbrians was formerly divided —

passed to Eanfrid, the son of Ethelfrid, who derived his origin from the royal family of that province. For all the time that Edwin reigned, the sons of the aforesaid Ethelfrid, who had reigned before him, with many of the younger nobility, lived in banishment among the Scots or Picts, and were there instructed according to the doctrine of the Scots, and were renewed with the grace of Baptism. Upon the death of the king, their enemy, they were allowed to return home, and the aforesaid Eanfrid, as the eldest of them, became king of the Bernicians. Both those kings, as soon as they obtained the government of their earthly kingdoms, abjured and betrayed the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom to which they had been admitted, and again delivered themselves up to defilement and perdition through the abominations of their former idolatry.

But soon after, the king of the Britons, Caedwalla, the unrighteous instrument of rightful vengeance, slew them both. First, in the following summer, he put Osric to death; for, being rashly besieged by him in the municipal town, he sallied out on a sudden with all his forces, took him by surprise, and destroyed him and all his army. Then, when he had occupied the provinces of the Northumbrians for a whole year, not ruling them like a victorious king, but ravaging them like a furious tyrant, he at length put an end to Eanfrid, in like manner, when he unadvisedly came to him with only twelve chosen soldiers, to sue for peace. To this day, that year is looked upon as ill-omened, and hateful to all good men; as well on account of the apostacy of the English kings, who had renounced the mysteries of the faith, as of the outrageous tyranny of the British king. Hence it has been generally agreed, in reckoning the dates of the kings, to abolish the memory of those faithless monarchs, and to assign that year to the reign of the following king, Oswald, a man beloved of God. This king, after the death of his brother Eanfrid, advanced with an army, small, indeed, in number, but strengthened with the faith of Christ; and the impious commander of the Britons, in spite of his vast forces, which he boasted nothing could withstand, was slain at a place called in the English tongue Denisesburna, that is, the brook of Denis.

CHAP. 2

Ostennditur autem usque hodie, et in magna ueneratione habetur locus ille, ubi uenturus ad hanc pugnam Osuald signum sanctae crucis erexit, ac flexis genibus Deum deprecatus est, ut in tanta rerum necessitate suis cultoribus caelesti succurreret auxilio. Denique fertur, quia facta citato opere cruce, ac fouea praeparata, in qua statui deberet, ipse fide feruens hanc arripuerit, ac foueae inposuerit, atque utraque manu erectam tenuerit, donec adgesto a militibus puluere terrae figeretur; et hoc facto, elata in altum uoce cuncto exercitui proclamauerit: 'Flectamus omnes genua, et Deum omnipotentem, uiuum, ac uerum in commune deprecemur, ut nos ab hoste superbo ac feroce sua miseratione defendat; scit enim ipse, quia iusta pro salute gentis nostrae bella suscepimus.' Fecerunt omnes, ut iusserat, et sic incipiente diluculo in hostem progressi, iuxta meritum suae fidei uictoria potiti sunt. In cuius loco orationis innumerae uirtutes sanitatum noscuntur esse patratae, ad indicium uidelicet ac memoriam fidei regis. Nam et usque hodie multi de ipso ligno sacrosanctae crucis astulas excidere solent, quas cum in aquas miserint, eisque languentes homines aut pecudes potauerint, siue asperserint, mox sanitati restituuntur.

Uocatur locus ille lingua Anglorum Hefenfelth, quod dici potest latine caelestis campus, quod certo utique praesagio futurorum antiquitus nomen accepit; significans nimirum, quod ibidem caeleste erigendum tropaeum, caelestis inchoanda uictoria, caelestia usque hodie forent miracula celebranda. Est autem locus iuxta murum illum ad aquilonem, quo Romani quondam ob arcendos barbarorum impetus totam a mari ad mare praecinxere Brittaniam, ut supra docuimus. In quo uidelicet loco consuetudinem multo iam tempore fecerant fratres Hagustaldensis ecclesiae, quae non longe abest, aduenientes omni anno pridie quam postea idem rex Osuald occisus est, uigilias pro salute animae eius facere, plurimaque psalmorum laude celebrata, uictimam pro eo mane sacrae oblationis offerre. Qui etiam crescente bona consuetudine, nuper ibidem ecclesia constructa, sacratiorem et cunctis honorabiliorem omnibus locum fecere. Nec inmerito, quia nullum, ut conperimus, fidei Christianae signum, nulla ecclesia, nullum altare in tota Berniciorum gente erectum est, priusquam hoc sacrae crucis uexillum nouus militiae dux, dictante fidei deuotione, contra hostem inmanissimum pugnaturus statueret.

Nec ab re est unum e pluribus, quae ad hanc crucem patrata sunt, uirtutis miraculum enarrare. Quidam de fratribus eiusdem Hagustaldensis ecclesiae, nomine Bothelm qui nunc usque superest, ante paucos annos, dum incautius forte noctu in glacie incederet, repente conuens, brachium contriuit, ac grauissima fracturae ipsius coepit molestia fatigari; ita ut ne ad os quidem adducere ipsum brachium ullatenus dolore arcente ualeret. Qui cum die quadam mane audiret unum de fratribus ad locum eiusdem sanctae crucis ascendere disposuisse, rogauit, ut aliquam sibi partem de illo ligno uenerabili

rediens adferret, credere se dicens, quia per hoc, donante Domino, salutem posset consequi. Fecit ille, ut rogatus est, et reuersus ad uesperam, sedentibus iam ad mensam fratribus, obtulit ei aliquid de ueteri musco, quo superficies ligni erat obsita. Qui cum sedens ad mensam non haberet ad manum, ubi oblatum sibi munus reponeret, misit hoc in sinum sibi. Et dum iret cubitum, oblitus hoc alicubi deponere, permisit suo in sinu permanere. At medio noctis tempore, cum euigilaret, sensit nescio quid frigidi suo lateri adiacere, admotaque manu requirere quid esset, ita sanum brachium manumque repperit, ac si nihil umquam tanti langoris habuisset.

Chap. II.

How, among innumerable other miracles of healing wrought by the wood of the cross, which King Oswald, being ready to engage against the barbarians, erected, a certain man had his injured arm healed. [634 a.d.]

The place is shown to this day, and held in much veneration, where Oswald, being about to engage in this battle, erected the symbol of the Holy Cross, and knelt down and prayed to God that he would send help from Heaven to his worshippers in their sore need. Then, we are told, that the cross being made in haste, and the hole dug in which it was to be set up, the king himself, in the ardour of his faith, laid hold of it and held it upright with both his hands, till the earth was heaped up by the soldiers and it was fixed. Thereupon, uplifting his voice, he cried to his whole army, "Let us all kneel, and together beseech the true and living God Almighty in His mercy to defend us from the proud and cruel enemy; for He knows that we have undertaken a just war for the safety of our nation." All did as he had commanded, and accordingly advancing towards the enemy with the first dawn of day, they obtained the victory, as their faith deserved. In the place where they prayed very many miracles of healing are known to have been wrought, as a token and memorial of the king's faith; for even to this day, many are wont to cut off small splinters from the wood of the holy cross, and put them into water, which they give to sick men or cattle to drink, or they sprinkle them therewith, and these are presently restored to health.

The place is called in the English tongue Hefenfelth, or the Heavenly Field, which name it undoubtedly received of old as a presage of what was afterwards to happen, denoting, that the heavenly trophy was to be erected, the heavenly victory begun, and heavenly miracles shown forth to this day. The place is near the wall in the north which the Romans formerly drew across the whole of Britain from sea to sea, to restrain the onslaught of the barbarous nations, as has been said before. Hither also the brothers of the church of Hagustald, which is not far distant, long ago made it their custom to resort every year, on the day before that on which King Oswald was afterwards slain, to keep vigils there for the health of his soul, and having

sung many psalms of praise, to offer for him in the morning the sacrifice of the Holy Oblation. And since that good custom has spread, they have lately built a church there, which has attached additional sanctity and honour in the eyes of all men to that place; and this with good reason; for it appears that there was no symbol of the Christian faith, no church, no altar erected throughout all the nation of the Bernicians, before that new leader in war, prompted by the zeal of his faith, set up this standard of the Cross as he was going to give battle to his barbarous enemy.

Nor is it foreign to our purpose to relate one of the many miracles that have been wrought at this cross. One of the brothers of the same church of Hagulstald, whose name is Bothelm, and who is still living, a few years ago, walking carelessly on the ice at night, suddenly fell and broke his arm; he was soon tormented with a most grievous pain in the broken part, so that he could not lift his arm to his mouth for the anguish. Hearing one morning that one of the brothers designed to go up to the place of the holy cross, he desired him, on his return, to bring him a piece of that sacred wood, saying, he believed that with the mercy of God he might thereby be healed. The brother did as he was desired; and returning in the evening, when the brothers were sitting at table, gave him some of the old moss which grew on the surface of the wood. As he sat at table, having no place to bestow the gift which was brought him, he put it into his bosom; and forgetting, when he went to bed, to put it away, left it in his bosom. Awaking in the middle of the night, he felt something cold lying by his side, and putting his hand upon it to feel what it was, he found his arm and hand as sound as if he had never felt any such pain.

CHAP. 3

Idem ergo Osuald, mox ubi regnum suscepit, desiderans totam, cui praeesse coepit, gentem fidei Christianae gratia inbui, cuius experimenta permaxima in expugnandis barbaris iam ceperat, misit ad maiores natu Scottorum, inter quos exulans ipse baptismatis sacramenta cum his, qui secum erant, militibus consecutus erat;

petens, ut sibi mitteretur antistes, cuius doctrina ac ministerio gens, quam regebat, Anglorum, dominicae fidei et dona disceret, et susciperet sacramenta. Neque aliquanto tardius, quod petiit, inpetrauit; accepit namque pontificem Aedanum summae mansuetudinis, et pietatis, ac moderaminis uirum, habentemque zelum Dei, quamuis non plene secundum scientiam. Namque diem paschae dominicum more suae gentis, cuius saepius mentionem fecimus, a XIIIa luna usque ad XXam obseruare solebat. Hoc etenim ordine septentrionalis Scottorum prouincia, et omnis natio Pictorum illo adhuc tempore pascha dominicum celebrabat, aestimans se in hac obseruantia sancti ac laude digni patris Anatolii scripta secutam. Quod an uerum sit, peritus quisque facillime cognoscit. Porro gentes Scottorum, quae in australibus Hiberniae insulae partibus morabantur, iamdudum ad admonitionem apostolicae sedis antistitis, pascha canonico ritu obseruare didicerunt.

Uenienti igitur ad se episcopo, rex locum sedis episcopalis in insula Lindisfarnensi, ubi ipse petebat, tribuit. Qui uidelicet locus accedente ac recedente reumate, bis cotidie instar insulae maris circumluitur undis, bis renudato littore contiguus terrae redditur; atque eius admonitionibus humiliter ac libenter in omnibus auscultans, ecclesiam Christi in regno suo multum diligenter aedificare ac dilatare curauit. Ubi pulcherrimo saepe spectaculo contigit, ut euangelizante antistite, qui Anglorum linguam perfecte non nouerat, ipse rex suis ducibus ac ministris interpretes uerbi existeret caelestis; quia nimirum tam longo exilii sui tempore linguam Scottorum iam plene didicerat. Exin coepere plures per dies de Scottorum regione uenire Brittaniam atque illis Anglorum prouinciis, quibus regnauit Osuald, magna deuotione uerbum fidei praedicare et credentibus gratiam baptismi, quicumque sacerdotali erant gradu praediti, ministrare. Construebantur ergo ecclesiae per loca, confluebant ad audiendum uerbum populi gaudentes, donabantur munere regio possessiones et territoria ad instituenda monasteria, inbuebantur praeceptoribus Scottis paruuli Anglorum una cum maioribus studiis et obseruatione disciplinae regularis.

Nam monachi erant maxime, qui ad praedicandum uenerant. Monachus ipse episcopus Aedan, utpote de insula, quae uocatur Hii, destinatus, cuius monasterium in cunctis pene septentrionalium Scottorum, et omnium Pictorum monasteriis non paruo tempore arcem tenebat, regendisque eorum populis praeerat;

quae uidelicet insula ad ius quidem Britanniae pertinet, non magno ab ea freto discreta, sed donatione Pictorum, qui illas Britanniae plagas incolunt, iamdudum monachis Scottorum tradita, eo quod illis praedicantibus fidem Christi perceperint.

Chap. III.

How the same king Oswald, asking a bishop of the Scottish nation, had Aidan sent him, and granted him an episcopal see in the Isle of Lindisfarne, [635 a.d.]

The same Oswald, as soon as he ascended the throne, being desirous that all the nation under his rule should be endued with the grace of the Christian faith, whereof he had found happy experience in vanquishing the barbarians, sent to the elders of the Scots, among whom himself and his followers, when in banishment, had received the sacrament of Baptism, desiring that they would send him a bishop, by whose instruction and ministry the English nation, which he governed, might learn the privileges and receive the Sacraments of the faith of our Lord. Nor were they slow in granting his request; for they sent him Bishop Aidan, a man of singular gentleness, piety, and moderation; having a zeal of God, but not fully according to knowledge; for he was wont to keep Easter Sunday according to the custom of his country, which we have before so often mentioned, from the fourteenth to the twentieth of the moon; the northern province of the Scots, and all the nation of the Picts, at that time still celebrating Easter after that manner, and believing that in this observance they followed the writings of the holy and praiseworthy Father Anatolius. Whether this be true, every instructed person can easily judge. But the Scots which dwelt in the South of Ireland had long since, by the admonition of the Bishop of the Apostolic see, learned to observe Easter according to the canonical custom.

On the arrival of the bishop, the king appointed him his episcopal see in the island of Lindisfarne, as he desired. Which place, as the tide ebbs and flows, is twice a day enclosed by the waves of the sea like an island; and again, twice, when the beach is left dry, becomes contiguous with the land. The king also humbly and willingly in all things giving ear to his admonitions, industriously applied himself to build up and extend the Church of Christ in his kingdom; wherein, when the bishop, who was not perfectly skilled in the English tongue, preached the Gospel, it was a fair sight to see the king himself interpreting the Word of God to his ealdormen and thegns, for he had thoroughly learned the language of the Scots during his long banishment. From that time many came daily into Britain from the country of the Scots, and with great devotion preached the Word to those provinces of the English, over which King Oswald reigned, and those among them that had received priest's orders, administered the grace of Baptism to the believers. Churches

were built in divers places; the people joyfully flocked together to hear the Word; lands and other property were given of the king's bounty to found monasteries; English children, as well as their elders, were instructed by their Scottish teachers in study and the observance of monastic discipline. For most of those who came to preach were monks. Bishop Aidan was himself a monk, having been sent out from the island called Hii, whereof the monastery was for a long time the chief of almost all those of the northern Scots, and all those of the Picts, and had the direction of their people. That island belongs to Britain, being divided from it by a small arm of the sea, but had been long since given by the Picts, who inhabit those parts of Britain, to the Scottish monks, because they had received the faith of Christ through their preaching.

CHAP. 4

Siquidem anno incarnationis dominicae DoLXoVo, quo tempore gubernaculum Romani imperii post Iustinianum Iustinus minor accepit, uenit de Hibernia presbyter et abbas habitu et uita monachi insignis, nomine Columba Britanniam, praedicaturus uerbum Dei prouinciis septentrionalium Pictorum, hoc est eis quae arduis atque horrentibus montium iugis ab australibus eorum sunt regionibus sequestratae. Namque ipsi australes Picti, qui intra eosdem montes habent sedes, multo ante tempore, ut perhibent, relicto errore idolatriae, fidem ueritatis acceperant, praedicante eis uerbum Nynia episcopo reuerentissimo et sanctissimo uiro de natione Brettonum, qui erat Romae regulariter fidem et mysteria ueritatis edoctus;

cuius sedem episcopatus, sancti Martini episcopi nomine et ecclesia insignem, ubi ipse etiam corpore una cum pluribus sanctis requiescit, iam nunc Anglorum gens obtinet. Qui locus, ad prouinciam Berniciorum pertinens, uulgo uocatur Ad Candidam Casam, eo quod ibi ecclesiam de lapide, insolito Brettonibus more fecerit.

Uenit autem Britanniam Columba, regnante Pictis Bridio filio Meilochon, rege potentissimo, nono anno regni eius, gentemque illam uerbo et exemplo ad fidem Christi conuertit; unde et praefatam insulam ab eis in possessionem monasterii faciendi accepit. Neque enim magna est, sed quasi familiarum quinque, iuxta aestimationem Anglorum; quam successores eius usque hodie tenent, ubi et ipse sepultus est, cum esset annorum LXXVII, post annos circiter XXX et duos, ex quo ipse Britanniam praedicaturus adiit. Fecerat autem, priusquam Britanniam ueniret, monasterium nobile in Hibernia, quod a copia roborum Dearnach lingua Scottorum, hoc est campus roborum, cognominatur. Ex quo utroque monasterio plurima exinde monasteria per discipulos eius et in Britania et in Hibernia propagata sunt, in quibus omnibus idem monasterium insulanum, in quo ipse requiescit corpore, principatum teneret.

Habere autem solet ipsa insula rectorem semper abbatem presbyterum, cuius iuri et omnis prouincia, et ipsi etiam episcopi ordine inusitato debeant esse subiecti, iuxta exemplum primi doctoris illius, qui non episcopus, sed presbyter extitit et monachus; de cuius uita et uerbis nonnulla a discipulis eius feruntur scripta haberi. Uerum qualiscumque fuerit ipse, nos hoc de illo certum tenemus, quia reliquit successores magna continentia ac diuino amore regularique institutione insignes; in tempore quidem summae festiuitatis dubios circulos sequentes, utpote quibus longe ultra orbem positus nemo synodalia paschalis obseruantiae decreta porrexerat; tantum ea, quae in propheticis, euangelicis, et apostolicis litteris discere poterant, pietatis et castitatis opera diligenter obseruantes. Permansit autem huiusmodi obseruantia paschalis apud eos tempore non paucio, hoc est usque ad annum

dominicæ incarnationis DCCXV per annos CL.

At tunc ueniente ad eos reuerentissimo et sanctissimo patre et sacerdote Ecgbercto, de natione Anglorum, qui in Hibernia diutius exulauerat pro Christo, eratque et doctissimus in scripturis, et longæua uitæ perfectione eximius, correcti sunt per eum, et ad uerum canonicumque paschæ diem translati; quem tamen et antea non semper in luna XIIIa cum Iudæis, ut quidam rebantur, sed in die quidem dominica, alia tamen, quam decebat, ebdomada celebrabant.

Sciebant enim, ut Christiani, resurrectionem dominicam, quæ prima sabbati facta est, prima sabbati semper esse celebrandam; sed ut barbari et rustici, quando eadem prima sabbati, quæ nunc dominica dies cognominatur, ueniret, minime didicerant. Uerum quia gratia caritatis feruere non omiserunt, et huius quoque rei notitiam ad perfectum percipere meruerunt, iuxta promissum apostoli dicentis: 'Et siquid aliter sapitis, et hoc quoque uobis Deus reuelabit.' De quo plenius in sequentibus suo loco dicendum est.

Chap. IV.

When the nation of the Picts received the faith of Christ. [565 a.d.]

In the year of our Lord 565, when Justin, the younger, the successor of Justinian, obtained the government of the Roman empire, there came into Britain from Ireland a famous priest and abbot, marked as a monk by habit and manner of life, whose name was Columba, to preach the word of God to the provinces of the northern Picts, who are separated from the southern parts belonging to that nation by steep and rugged mountains. For the southern Picts, who dwell on this side of those mountains, had, it is said, long before forsaken the errors of idolatry, and received the true faith by the preaching of Bishop Ninias, a most reverend and holy man of the British nation, who had been regularly instructed at Rome in the faith and mysteries of the truth; whose episcopal see, named after St. Martin the bishop, and famous for a church dedicated to him (wherein Ninias himself and many other saints rest in the body), is now in the possession of the English nation. The place belongs to the province of the Bernicians, and is commonly called the White House, because he there built a church of stone, which was not usual among the Britons.

Columba came into Britain in the ninth year of the reign of Bridius, who was the son of Meilochon, and the powerful king of the Pictish nation, and he converted that nation to the faith of Christ, by his preaching and example. Wherefore he also received of them the gift of the aforesaid island whereon to found a monastery. It is not a large island, but contains about five families, according to the English computation; his successors hold it to this day; he was also buried therein, having died at the age of seventy-seven, about thirty-two years after he came into Britain to preach. Before he crossed over into

Britain, he had built a famous monastery in Ireland, which, from the great number of oaks, is in the Scottish tongue called Dearthach — The Field of Oaks. From both these monasteries, many others had their beginning through his disciples, both in Britain and Ireland; but the island monastery where his body lies, has the pre-eminence among them all.

That island has for its ruler an abbot, who is a priest, to whose jurisdiction all the province, and even the bishops, contrary to the usual method, are bound to be subject, according to the example of their first teacher, who was not a bishop, but a priest and monk; of whose life and discourses some records are said to be preserved by his disciples. But whatsoever he was himself, this we know for certain concerning him, that he left successors renowned for their continence, their love of God, and observance of monastic rules. It is true they employed doubtful cycles in fixing the time of the great festival, as having none to bring them the synodal decrees for the observance of Easter, by reason of their being so far away from the rest of the world; but they earnestly practised such works of piety and chastity as they could learn from the Prophets, the Gospels and the Apostolic writings. This manner of keeping Easter continued among them no little time, to wit, for the space of 150 years, till the year of our Lord 715.

But then the most reverend and holy father and priest, Egbert, of the English nation, who had long lived in banishment in Ireland for the sake of Christ, and was most learned in the Scriptures, and renowned for long perfection of life, came among them, corrected their error, and led them to observe the true and canonical day of Easter; which, nevertheless, they did not always keep on the fourteenth of the moon with the Jews, as some imagined, but on Sunday, although not in the proper week. For, as Christians, they knew that the Resurrection of our Lord, which happened on the first day of the week, was always to be celebrated on the first day of the week; but being rude and barbarous, they had not learned when that same first day after the Sabbath, which is now called the Lord's day, should come. But because they had not failed in the grace of fervent charity, they were accounted worthy to receive the full knowledge of this matter also, according to the promise of the Apostle, "And if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." Of which we shall speak more fully hereafter in its proper place.

CHAP. 5

Ab hac ergo insula, ab horum collegio monachorum, ad prouinciam Anglorum instituendam in Christo, missus est Aedan, accepto gradu episcopatus. Quo tempore eidem monasterio Segeni abbas et presbyter praefuit. Unde inter alia uiuendi documenta saluberrimum abstinentiae uel continentiae clericis exemplum reliquit; cuius doctrinam id maxime commendabat omnibus, quod non aliter, quam uiuebat cum suis, ipse docebat. Nil enim huius mundi quaerere, nil amare curabat. Cuncta, quae sibi a regibus uel diuitibus saeculi donabantur, mox pauperibus, qui occurrerent, erogare gaudebat.

Discurrere per cuncta et urbana et rustica loca, non equorum dorso, sed pedum incessu uectus, nisi si maior forte necessitas compulisset, solebat; quatinus ubicumque aliquos uel diuites uel pauperes incedens aspexisset, confestim ad hos diuertens, uel ad fidei suscipiendae sacramentum, si infideles essent, inuitaret; uel si fideles, in ipsa eos fide confortaret, atque ad elemosynas operumque bonorum executionem, et uerbis excitaret et factis.

In tantum autem uita illius a nostri temporis segnitia distabat, ut omnes, qui cum eo incedebant, siue adtonsi, seu laici, meditari deberent, id est, aut legendis scripturis, aut psalmis discendis operam dare. Hoc erat cotidianum opus illius et omnium, qui cum eo erant, ubicumque locorum deuenissent. Et si forte euenisset, quod tamen raro euenit, ut ad regis conuiuium uocaretur, intrabat cum uno clerico aut duobus; et, ubi paululum reficiebatur, adcelerauit ocus ad legendum cum suis, siue ad orandum egredi. Cuius exemplis informati tempore illo religiosi quique uiri ac feminae consuetudinem fecerunt per totum annum, excepta remissione quinquagesimae paschalis, IIIa et VIa sabbati ieiunium ad nonam usque horam protelare. Numquam diuitibus honoris siue timoris gratia, siqua delinquissent, reticebat; sed aspera illos inuentione corripiebat. Nullam potentibus saeculi pecuniam, excepta solum esca, siquos hospitio suscepisset, umquam dare solebat, sed ea potius, quae sibi a diuitibus donaria pecuniarum largiebantur, uel in usus pauperum, ut diximus, dispergebat, uel ad redemptionem eorum, qui iniuste fuerant uenditi, dispensabat. Denique multos, quos pretio dato redemerat, redemptos postmodum suos discipulos fecit, atque ad sacerdotalem usque gradum erudiendo atque instituendo prouexit.

Ferunt autem, quia, cum de prouincia Scottorum rex Osuald postulasset antistitem, qui sibi suaeque genti uerbum fidei ministraret, missus fuerit primo alius austerioris animi uir, qui, cum aliquandiu genti Anglorum praedicans nihil proficeret, nec libenter a populo audiretur, redierit patriam, atque in conuentu seniorum rettulerit, quia nil prodesse docendo genti, ad quam missus erat, potuisset, eo quod essent homines indomabiles, et durae ac barbarae mentis. At illi, ut perhibent, tractatum magnum in concilio, quid esset

agendum, habere coeperunt; desiderantes quidem genti, quam petebantur, saluti esse, sed de non recepto, quem miserant, praedicatore dolentes. Tum ait Aedan, nam et ipse concilio intererat, ad eum, de quo agebatur, sacerdotem: ‘Uidetur mihi, frater, quia durior iusto indoctis auditoribus fuisti, et non eis iuxta apostolicam disciplinam primo lac doctrinae mollioris porrexisti, donec paulatim enutriti uerbo Dei, ad capienda perfectiora, et ad facienda sublimiora Dei praecepta sufficerent.’

Quo audito omnium, qui considebant, ad ipsum ora et oculi conuersi, diligenter, quid diceret, discutebant, et ipsum esse dignum episcopatu, ipsum ad erudiendos incredulos et indoctos mitti debere decernunt, qui gratia discretionis, quae uirtutum mater est, ante omnia probabatur inbutus; sicque illum ordinantes ad praedicandum miserunt. Qui ubi tempus accepit, sicut prius moderamine discretionis, ita postmodum et ceteris uirtutibus ornatus apparuit.

Chap. V.

Of the life of Bishop Aidan. [635 a.d.]

From this island, then, and the fraternity of these monks, Aidan was sent to instruct the English nation in Christ, having received the dignity of a bishop. At that time Segeni, abbot and priest, presided over that monastery. Among other lessons in holy living, Aidan left the clergy a most salutary example of abstinence and continence; it was the highest commendation of his doctrine with all men, that he taught nothing that he did not practise in his life among his brethren; for he neither sought nor loved anything of this world, but delighted in distributing immediately among the poor whom he met whatsoever was given him by the kings or rich men of the world. He was wont to traverse both town and country on foot, never on horseback, unless compelled by some urgent necessity; to the end that, as he went, he might turn aside to any whomsoever he saw, whether rich or poor, and call upon them, if infidels, to receive the mystery of the faith, or, if they were believers, strengthen them in the faith, and stir them up by words and actions to giving of alms and the performance of good works.

His course of life was so different from the slothfulness of our times, that all those who bore him company, whether they were tonsured or laymen, had to study either reading the Scriptures, or learning psalms. This was the daily employment of himself and all that were with him, wheresoever they went; and if it happened, which was but seldom, that he was invited to the king’s table, he went with one or two clerks, and having taken a little food, made haste to be gone, either to read with his brethren or to pray. At that time, many religious men and women, led by his example, adopted the custom of prolonging their fast on Wednesdays and Fridays, till the ninth hour, throughout the year, except during the fifty days after Easter. Never, through

fear or respect of persons, did he keep silence with regard to the sins of the rich; but was wont to correct them with a severe rebuke. He never gave money to the powerful men of the world, but only food, if he happened to entertain them; and, on the contrary, whatsoever gifts of money he received from the rich, he either distributed, as has been said, for the use of the poor, or bestowed in ransoming such as had been wrongfully sold for slaves. Moreover, he afterwards made many of those he had ransomed his disciples, and after having taught and instructed them, advanced them to priest's orders.

It is said, that when King Oswald had asked a bishop of the Scots to administer the Word of faith to him and his nation, there was first sent to him another man of more harsh disposition, who, after preaching for some time to the English and meeting with no success, not being gladly heard by the people, returned home, and in an assembly of the elders reported, that he had not been able to do any good by his teaching to the nation to whom he had been sent, because they were intractable men, and of a stubborn and barbarous disposition. They then, it is said, held a council and seriously debated what was to be done, being desirous that the nation should obtain the salvation it demanded, but grieving that they had not received the preacher sent to them. Then said Aidan, who was also present in the council, to the priest in question, "Methinks, brother, that you were more severe to your unlearned hearers than you ought to have been, and did not at first, conformably to the Apostolic rule, give them the milk of more easy doctrine, till, being by degrees nourished with the Word of God, they should be capable of receiving that which is more perfect and of performing the higher precepts of God." Having heard these words, all present turned their attention to him and began diligently to weigh what he had said, and they decided that he was worthy to be made a bishop, and that he was the man who ought to be sent to instruct the unbelieving and unlearned; since he was found to be endued preeminently with the grace of discretion, which is the mother of the virtues. So they ordained him and sent him forth to preach; and, as time went on, his other virtues became apparent, as well as that temperate discretion which had marked him at first.

CHAP. 6

Huius igitur antistitis doctrina rex Osuald cum ea, cui praeerat, gente Anglorum institutus, non solum incognita progenitoribus suis regna caelorum sperare didicit; sed et regna terrarum plus quam ulli maiorum suorum, ab eodem uno Deo, qui fecit caelum et terram, consecutus est. Denique omnes nationes et prouincias Brittaniae, quae in IIII linguas, id est Brettonum, Pictorum, Scottorum, et Anglorum, diuisae sunt, in dictione accepit.

Quo regni culmine sublimatus, nihilominus, quod mirum dictu est, pauperibus et peregrinis semper humilis, benignus, et largus fuit.

Denique fertur, quia tempore quodam, cum die sancto paschae cum praefato episcopo consedisset ad prandium, positusque esset in mensa coram eo discus argenteus regalibus epulis refertus, et iamiamque essent manus ad panem benedicendum missuri, intrasse subito ministrum ipsius, cui suscipiendorum inopum erat cura delegata, et indicasse regi, quia multitudo pauperum undecumque adueniens maxima per plateas sederet, postulans aliquid elimosynae a rege. Qui mox dapes sibimet adpositas deferri pauperibus, sed et discum confringi, atque eisdem minutatim diuidi praecepit. Quo uiso pontifex, qui adsidebat, delectatus tali facto pietatis, adprehendit dexteram eius, et ait: 'Numquam inueterescat haec manus.' Quod et ita iuxta uotum benedictionis eius prouenit. Nam cum interfecto illo in pugna, manus cum brachio a cetero essent corpore resectae, contigit, ut hactenus incorruptae perdurent. Denique in urbe regia, quae a regina quondam uocabulo Bebbia cognominatur, loculo inclusae argenteo in ecclesia sancti Petri seruantur, ac digno a cunctis honore uenerantur.

Huius industria regis Derorum et Berniciorum prouinciae, quae eatenus ab inuicem discordabant, in unam sunt pacem, et uelut unum conpaginatae in populum. Erat autem nepos Aeduini regis ex sorore Acha, dignumque fuit, ut tantus praecessor talem haberet de sua consanguinitate et religionis heredem et regni.

Chap. VI.

Of King Oswald's wonderful piety and religion. [635-642 a.d.]

King Oswald, with the English nation which he governed, being instructed by the teaching of this bishop, not only learned to hope for a heavenly kingdom unknown to his fathers, but also obtained of the one God, Who made heaven and earth, a greater earthly kingdom than any of his ancestors. In brief, he brought under his dominion all the nations and provinces of Britain, which are divided into four languages, to wit, those of the Britons, the Picts, the Scots, and the English. Though raised to that height of regal power, wonderful to relate, he was always humble, kind, and generous to the poor and to strangers.

To give one instance, it is told, that when he was once sitting at dinner, on the holy day of Easter, with the aforesaid bishop, and a silver dish full of royal dainties was set before him, and they were just about to put forth their hands to bless the bread, the servant, whom he had appointed to relieve the needy, came in on a sudden, and told the king, that a great multitude of poor folk from all parts was sitting in the streets begging alms of the king; he immediately ordered the meat set before him to be carried to the poor, and the dish to be broken in pieces and divided among them. At which sight, the bishop who sat by him, greatly rejoicing at such an act of piety, clasped his right hand and said, "May this hand never decay." This fell out according to his prayer, for his hands with the arms being cut off from his body, when he was slain in battle, remain uncorrupted to this day, and are kept in a silver shrine, as revered relics, in St. Peter's church in the royal city, which has taken its name from Bebbæ, one of its former queens. Through this king's exertions the provinces of the Deiri and the Bernicians, which till then had been at variance, were peacefully united and moulded into one people. He was nephew to King Edwin through his sister Acha; and it was fit that so great a predecessor should have in his own family such an one to succeed him in his religion and sovereignty.

CHAP. 7

Eo tempore gens Occidentalium Saxonum, qui antiquitus Geuissae uocabantur, regnante Cynigilso fidem Christi suscepit, praedicante illis uerbum Birino episcopo, quicum consilio papae Honorii uenerat Britanniam, promittens quidem se illo praesente in intimis ultra Anglorum partibus, quo nullus doctor praecessisset, sanctae fidei semina esse sparsurum. Unde et iussu eiusdem pontificis per Asterium Genuensem episcopum in episcopatus consecratus est gradum. Sed Britanniam perueniens, ac primum Geuissorum gentem ingrediens, cum omnes ibidem paganissimos inueniret, utilius esse ratus est ibi potius uerbum praedicare, quam ultra progrediens eos, quibus praedicare deberet, inquirere.

Itaque euangelizante illo in praefata prouincia, cum rex ipse cathecizatus, fonte baptismi cum sua gente ablueretur, contigit tunc temporis sanctissimum ac uictoriosissimum regem Nordanhymbrorum Osualdum adfuisse, eumque de lauacro exeuntem suscepisse, ac pulcherrimo prorsus et Deo digno consortio, cuius erat filiam accepturus in coniugem, ipsum prius secunda generatione Deo dedicatum sibi accepit in filium. Donauerunt autem ambo reges eidem episcopo ciuitatem, quae uocatur Dorcic, ad faciendum inibi sedem episcopalem; ubi factis dedicatisque ecclesiis, multisque ad Dominum pio eius labore populis aduocatis, migravit ad Dominum, sepultusque est in eadem ciuitate, et post annos multos, Haedde episcopatum agente, translatus inde in Uentam ciuitatem, atque in ecclesia beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli positus est.

Defuncto autem et rege, successit in regnum filius eius Coinualch, qui et fidem ac sacramenta regni caelestis suscipere rennuit, et non multo post etiam regni terrestri potentiam perdidit. Repudiata enim sorore Pendan regis Merciorum, quam duxerat, aliam accepit uxorem;

ideoque bello petitus, ac regno priuatus ab illo, secessit ad regem Orientalium Anglorum, cui nomen erat Anna; apud quem triennio exulans fidem cognouit ac suscepit ueritatis. Nam et ipse, apud quem exulabat, rex erat uir bonus, et bona ac sancta sobole felix, ut in sequentibus docebimus.

Cum uero restitutus esset in regnum Coinualch, uenit in prouinciam de Hibernia pontifex quidam nomine Agilberctus, natione quidem Gallus, sed tunc legendarum gratia scripturarum in Hibernia non paruo tempore demoratus, coniunxitque se regi, sponte ministerium praedicandi assumens. Cuius eruditionem atque industriam uidens rex, rogauit eum, accepta ibi sede episcopali, suae gentis manere pontificem; qui precibus eius adnuens, multis annis eidem genti sacerdotali iure praefuit. Tandem rex, qui Saxonum tantum linguam nouerat, pertaesus barbarae loquellae, subintroduxit in prouinciam alium suae linguae episcopum, uocabulo Uini, et ipsum in Gallia ordinatum; diuidensque in duas parrochias prouinciam, huic in ciuitate Uenta, quae a

gente Saxonum UintancÃ'stir appellatur, sedem episcopatus tribuit; unde offensus grauiter Agilberctus, quod haec ipso inconsulto ageret rex, rediit Galliam, et accepto episcopatu Parisiaca ciuitatis, ibidem senex ac plenus dierum obiit. Non multis autem annis post abscessum eius a Brittaniam transactis, pulsus est et Uini ab eodem rege de episcopatu; qui secedens ad regem Merciorum uocabulo Uulfheri, emit pretio ab eo sedem Lundoniae ciuitatis, eiusque episcopus usque ad uitae suae terminum mansit.

Sicque prouincia Occidentalium Saxonum tempore non paucis absque praesule fuit.

Quo etiam tempore rex praefatus ipsius gentis, grauissimis regni sui damnis saepissime ab hostibus adflictus, tandem ad memoriam reduxit, quod eum pridem perfidia regno pulerit, fides agnita Christi in regnum reuocauerit; intellexitque, quod etiam tunc destituta pontifice prouincia recte pariter diuino fuerit destituta praesidio.

Misit ergo legatarios in Galliam ad Agilberctum, summissa illum satisfactione deprecans ad episcopatum suae gentis redire. At ille se excusans, et uenire non posse contestans, quia episcopatu propriae ciuitatis ac parrochiae teneretur adstrictus, ne tamen obnixae petenti nil ferret auxilii, misit pro se illo presbyterum Leutherium nepotem suum, qui ei, si uellet, ordinaretur episcopus;

icens, quod ipse eum dignum esse episcopatu iudicaret. Quo honorifice a populo et a rege suscepto, rogauerunt Theodorum, tunc archiepiscopum Doruuernensis ecclesiae, ipsum sibi antistitem consecrari; qui consecratus in ipsa ciuitate, multis annis episcopatum Geuissorum ex synodica sanctione solus sedulo moderamine gessit.

Chap. VII.

How the West Saxons received the Word of God by the preaching of Birinus; and of his successors, Agilbert and Leutherius. [635-670 a.d.]

At that time, the West Saxons, formerly called Gewissae, in the reign of Cynegils, received the faith of Christ, through the preaching of Bishop Birinus, who came into Britain by the counsel of Pope Honorius; having promised in his presence that he would sow the seed of the holy faith in the farthest inland regions of the English, where no other teacher had been before him. Hereupon at the bidding of the Pope he received episcopal consecration from Asterius, bishop of Genoa; but on his arrival in Britain, he first came to the nation of the Gewissae, and finding all in that place confirmed pagans, he thought it better to preach the Word there, than to proceed further to seek for other hearers of his preaching.

Now, as he was spreading the Gospel in the aforesaid province, it happened that when the king himself, having received instruction as a

catechumen, was being baptized together with his people, Oswald, the most holy and victorious king of the Northumbrians, being present, received him as he came forth from baptism, and by an honourable alliance most acceptable to God, first adopted as his son, thus born again and dedicated to God, the man whose daughter he was about to receive in marriage. The two kings gave to the bishop the city called Dorcic, there to establish his episcopal see; where having built and consecrated churches, and by his pious labours called many to the Lord, he departed to the Lord, and was buried in the same city; but many years after, when Haedde was bishop, he was translated thence to the city of Venta, and laid in the church of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul.

When the king died, his son Coinwalch succeeded him on the throne, but refused to receive the faith and the mysteries of the heavenly kingdom; and not long after he lost also the dominion of his earthly kingdom; for he put away the sister of Penda, king of the Mercians, whom he had married, and took another wife; whereupon a war ensuing, he was by him deprived of his kingdom, and withdrew to Anna, king of the East Angles, where he lived three years in banishment, and learned and received the true faith; for the king, with whom he lived in his banishment, was a good man, and happy in a good and saintly offspring, as we shall show hereafter.

But when Coinwalch was restored to his kingdom, there came into that province out of Ireland, a certain bishop called Agilbert, a native of Gaul, but who had then lived a long time in Ireland, for the purpose of reading the Scriptures. He attached himself to the king, and voluntarily undertook the ministry of preaching. The king, observing his learning and industry, desired him to accept an episcopal see there and remain as the bishop of his people. Agilbert complied with the request, and presided over that nation as their bishop for many years. At length the king, who understood only the language of the Saxons, weary of his barbarous tongue, privately brought into the province another bishop, speaking his own language, by name Wini, who had also been ordained in Gaul; and dividing his province into two dioceses, appointed this last his episcopal see in the city of Venta, by the Saxons called Wintancaestir. Agilbert, being highly offended, that the king should do this without consulting him, returned into Gaul, and being made bishop of the city of Paris, died there, being old and full of days. Not many years after his departure out of Britain, Wini was also expelled from his bishopric by the same king, and took refuge with Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, of whom he purchased for money the see of the city of London, and remained bishop thereof till his death. Thus the province of the West Saxons continued no small time without a bishop.

During which time, the aforesaid king of that nation, sustaining repeatedly very great losses in his kingdom from his enemies, at length bethought himself, that as he had been before expelled from the throne for his unbelief, he had been restored when he acknowledged the faith of Christ; and he

perceived that his kingdom, being deprived of a bishop, was justly deprived also of the Divine protection. He, therefore, sent messengers into Gaul to Agilbert, with humble apologies entreating him to return to the bishopric of his nation. But he excused himself, and protested that he could not go, because he was bound to the bishopric of his own city and diocese; notwithstanding, in order to give him some help in answer to his earnest request, he sent thither in his stead the priest Leutherius, his nephew, to be ordained as his bishop, if he thought fit, saying that he thought him worthy of a bishopric. The king and the people received him honourably, and asked Theodore, then Archbishop of Canterbury, to consecrate him as their bishop. He was accordingly consecrated in the same city, and many years diligently governed the whole bishopric of the West Saxons by synodical authority.

CHAP. 8

Anno dominicae incarnationis DCXL, Eadbald rex Cantuariorum transiens ex hac uita, Earconbercto filio regni gubernacula reliquit; quae ille suscepta XXIII annis et aliquot mensibus nobilissime tenuit. Hic primus regum Anglorum in toto regno suo idola relinqui ac destrui, simul et ieiunium XL dierum observari principali auctoritate praecepit. Quae ne facile a quopiam posset contemni, in transgressores dignas et competentes punitiones proposuit. Cuius filia Earcongotā, ut condigna parenti suboles, magnarum fuit uirgo uirtutum, seruiens Domino in monasterio, quod in regione Francorum constructum est ab abbatisa nobilissima uocabulo Fara, in loco, qui dicitur in Brige. Nam eo tempore necdum multis in regione Anglorum monasteriis constructis, multi de Brittania monachicae conuersionis gratia Francorum uel Galliarum monasteria adire solebant; sed et filias suas eisdem erudiendas, ac sponso caelesti copulandas mittebant; maxime in Brige, et in Cale, et in Andilegum monasterio; inter quas erat Saethryd, filia uxoris Annae regis Orientalium Anglorum, cuius supra meminimus, et filia naturalis eiusdem regis Aedilberg; quae utraque cum esset peregrina, prae merito uirtutum eiusdem monasterii Brigensis est abbatisa constituta. Cuius regis filia maior Sexburg, uxor Earconbercti regis Cantuariorum, habuit filiam Earcongotam, de qua sumus dicturi.

Huius autem uirginis Deo dicatae multa quidem ab incolis loci illius solent opera uirtutum et signa miraculorum usque hodie narrari.

Uerum nos de transitu tantum illius, quo caelestia regna petiit, aliquid breuiter dicere sufficiat.

Inminente ergo die suae uocationis, coepit circuire in monasterio casulas infirmarum Christi famularum, earumque uel maxime, quae uel aetate proeclatae, uel probitate erant morum insigniores. Quarum se omnium precibus humiliter commendans, obitum proxime suum, quem reuelatione didicerat, non celauit esse futurum. Quam uidelicet reuelationem huiusmodi esse perhibebat: uidisse se albatorum cateruam hominum idem monasterium intrare; hosque a se interrogatos, quid quaererent, aut quid ibi uellent, respondisse, quod ob hoc illo fuerint destinati, ut aureum illud nomisma, quod eo de Cantia uenerat, secum adsumerent. Ipsa autem nocte, in cuius ultima parte, id est incipiente aurora, praesentis mundi tenebras transiens supernam migravit ad lucem, multi de fratribus eiusdem monasterii, qui aliis erant in aedibus, iam manifeste se concentus angelorum psallentium audisse referebant, sed et sonitum quasi plurimae multitudinis monasterium ingredientis; unde mox egressi dignoscere quid esset, uiderunt lucem caelitus emissam fuisse permaximam, quae sanctam illam animam carnis uinculis absolutam ad aeterna patriae caelestis gaudia ducebat. Addunt et alia, quae ipsa nocte in monasterio eodem diuinitus fuerint ostensa miracula; sed haec

nos ad alia tendentes, suis narrare permittimus. Sepultum est autem corpus uenerabile uirginis et sponsae Christi in ecclesia beati protomartyris Stephani; placuitque post diem tertium, ut lapis, quo monumentum tegebatur, amoueretur, et altius ipso in loco reponeretur; quod dum fieret, tantae flagrantia suauitatis ab imis ebulliuit, ut cunctis, qui adstabant, fratribus ac sororibus, quasi opobalsami cellaria esse uiderentur aperta.

Sed et matertera eius, de qua diximus, Aedilberg, et ipsa Deo dilectam perpetuae uirginitatis gloriam in magna corporis continentia seruauit; quae cuius esset uirtutis, magis post mortem claruit. Cum enim esset abbatissa, coepit facere in monasterio suo ecclesiam in honorem omnium apostolorum, in qua suum corpus sepelli cupiebat. Sed cum opus idem ad medium ferme esset perductum, illa ne hoc perficeret, morte praerepta est, et in ipso ecclesiae loco, ubi desiderabat, condita. Post cuius mortem, fratribus alia magis curantibus, intermissum est hoc aedificium annis VII, quibus conpletis statuerunt ob nimietatem laboris, huius structuram ecclesiae funditus relinquere, ossa uero abbatissae illo de loco eleuata, in aliam ecclesiam, quae esset perfecta ac dedicata, transferre. Et aperientes sepulchrum eius, ita intemeratum corpus inuenere, ut a corruptione concupiscentiae carnalis erat immune; et ita denuo lotum, atque aliis uestibus indutum transtulerunt illud in ecclesiam beati Stephani martyris. Cuius uidelicet natalis ibi solet in magna gloria celebrari die Nonarum Iuliarum.

Chap. VIII.

How Earconbert, King of Kent, ordered the idols to be destroyed; and of his daughter Earcongota, and his kinswoman Ethelberg, virgins consecrated to God. [640 a.d.]

In the year of our Lord 640, Eadbald, king of Kent, departed this life, and left his kingdom to his son Earconbert, who governed it most nobly twenty-four years and some months. He was the first of the English kings that of his supreme authority commanded the idols throughout his whole kingdom to be forsaken and destroyed, and the fast of forty days to be observed; and that the same might not be lightly neglected, he appointed fitting and condign punishments for the offenders. His daughter Earcongota, as became the offspring of such a parent, was a most virtuous virgin, serving God in a monastery in the country of the Franks, built by a most noble abbess, named Fara, at a place called In Brige; for at that time but few monasteries had been built in the country of the Angles, and many were wont, for the sake of monastic life, to repair to the monasteries of the Franks or Gauls; and they also sent their daughters there to be instructed, and united to their Heavenly Bridegroom, especially in the monasteries of Brige, of Cale, and Andilegum. Among whom was also Saethryth, daughter of the wife of Anna, king of the East Angles, above mentioned; and Ethelberg, the king's own daughter; both

of whom, though strangers, were for their virtue made abbesses of the monastery of Brige. Sexburg, that king's elder daughter, wife to Earconbert, king of Kent, had a daughter called Earcongota, of whom we are about to speak.

Many wonderful works and miracles of this virgin, dedicated to God, are to this day related by the inhabitants of that place; but for us it shall suffice to say something briefly of her departure out of this world to the heavenly kingdom. The day of her summoning drawing near, she began to visit in the monastery the cells of the infirm handmaidens of Christ, and particularly those that were of a great age, or most noted for their virtuous life, and humbly commending herself to their prayers, she let them know that her death was at hand, as she had learnt by revelation, which she said she had received in this manner. She had seen a band of men, clothed in white, come into the monastery, and being asked by her what they wanted, and what they did there, they answered, "They had been sent thither to carry away with them the gold coin that had been brought thither from Kent." Towards the close of that same night, as morning began to dawn, leaving the darkness of this world, she departed to the light of heaven. Many of the brethren of that monastery who were in other houses, declared they had then plainly heard choirs of singing angels, and, as it were, the sound of a multitude entering the monastery. Whereupon going out immediately to see what it might be, they beheld a great light coming down from heaven, which bore that holy soul, set loose from the bonds of the flesh, to the eternal joys of the celestial country. They also tell of other miracles that were wrought that night in the same monastery by the power of God; but as we must proceed to other matters, we leave them to be related by those whose concern they are. The body of this venerable virgin and bride of Christ was buried in the church of the blessed protomartyr, Stephen. It was thought fit, three days after, to take up the stone that covered the tomb, and to raise it higher in the same place, and whilst they were doing this, so sweet a fragrance rose from below, that it seemed to all the brethren and sisters there present, as if a store of balsam had been opened.

Her aunt also, Ethelberg, of whom we have spoken, preserved the glory, acceptable to God, of perpetual virginity, in a life of great self-denial, but the extent of her virtue became more conspicuous after her death. Whilst she was abbess, she began to build in her monastery a church, in honour of all the Apostles, wherein she desired that her body should be buried; but when that work was advanced half way, she was prevented by death from finishing it, and was buried in the place in the church which she had chosen. After her death, the brothers occupied themselves with other things, and this structure was left untouched for seven years, at the expiration whereof they resolved, by reason of the greatness of the work, wholly to abandon the building of the church, and to remove the abbess's bones thence to some other church that was finished and consecrated. On opening her tomb, they found the body as

untouched by decay as it had been free from the corruption of carnal concupiscence, and having washed it again and clothed it in other garments, they removed it to the church of the blessed Stephen, the Martyr. And her festival is wont to be celebrated there with much honour on the 7th of July.

CHAP. 9

Regnauit autem Osuald christianissimus rex Nordanhymbrorum VIII annos, adnumerato etiam illo, quem et feralis impietas regis Brettonum, et apostasia demens regum Anglorum detestabilem fecerat.

Siquidem, ut supra docuimus, unanimo omnium consensu firmatum est, ut nomen et memoria apostatarum de catalogo regum Christianorum prorsus aboleri deberet, neque aliquis regno eorum annus adnotari.

Quo completo annorum curriculo occisus est, commisso graui proelio, ab eadem pagana gente paganoque rege Merciorum, a quo et prodecessor eius Aeduini peremptus fuerat, in loco, qui lingua Anglorum nuncupatur Maserfelth, anno aetatis suae XXXVIII., die quinto mensis Augusti.

Cuius quanta fides in Deum, quae deuotio mentis fuerit, etiam post mortem uirtutum miraculis claruit. Namque in loco, ubi pro patria dimicans a paganis interfectus est, usque hodie sanitates infirmorum et hominum et pecorum celebrari non desinunt. Unde contigit, ut puluerem ipsum, ubi corpus eius in terram conruit, multi auferentes et in aquam mittentes suis per haec infirmis multum commodi adferrent. Qui uidelicet mos adeo increbruit, ut paulatim ablata exinde terra fossam ad mensuram staturae uirilis altam reddiderit.

Nec mirandum in loco mortis illius infirmos sanari, qui semper, dum uiueret, infirmis et pauperibus consulere, elemosynas dare, opem ferre non cessabat. Et multa quidem in loco illo uel de puluere loci illius facta uirtutum miracula narrantur; sed nos duo tantum, quae a maioribus audiuius, referre satis duximus.

Non multo post interfectionem eius exacto tempore, contigit, ut quidam equo sedens iter iuxta locum ageret illum; cuius equus subito lassescere, consistere, caput in terram declinare, spumas ex ore demittere, et, augescente dolore nimio, in terram coepit ruere.

Desiluit eques, et stramine subtracto coepit expectare horam, qua aut melioratum reciperet iumentum, aut relinqueret mortuum. At ipsum diu graui dolore uexatum, cum diuersas in partes se torqueret, repente uolutando deuenit in illud loci, ubi rex memorabilis occubuit. Nec mora, quiescente dolore cessabat ab insanis membrorum motibus, et consueto equorum more, quasi post lassitudinem in diuersum latus uicissim sese uoluere, statimque exurgens quasi sanum per omnia, uirecta herbarum auidius carpere coepit.

Quo ille uiso, ut uir sagacis ingenii, intellexit aliquid mirae sanctitatis huic loco, quo equus est curatus, inesse; et posito ibi signo, non multo post ascendit equum, atque ad hospitium, quo proposuerat, accessit; quo dum adueniret, inuenit puellam ibi neptem patris familias longo paralysis morbo grauata; et cum familiares domus illius de acerba puellae infirmitate ipso praesente quererentur, coepit dicere ille de loco, ubi caballus suus esset curatus. Quid

multa? inponentes eam carro, duxerunt ad locum, ibidemque deposuerunt. At illa posita in loco obdormiuit parumper;

et ubi euigilauit, sanatam se ab illa corporis dissolutione sentiens, postulata aqua, ipsa lauit faciem, crines composuit, caput linteo cooperuit, et cum his, qui se adduxerant, sana pedibus incedendo reuersa est.

Chap. IX.

How miracles of healing have been frequently wrought in the place where King Oswald was killed; and how, first, a traveller's horse was restored and afterwards a young girl cured of the palsy. [642 a.d.]

Oswald, the most Christian king of the Northumbrians, reigned nine years, including that year which was held accursed for the barbarous cruelty of the king of the Britons and the reckless apostacy of the English kings; for, as was said above, it is agreed by the unanimous consent of all, that the names and memory of the apostates should be erased from the catalogue of the Christian kings, and no year assigned to their reign. After which period, Oswald was killed in a great battle, by the same pagan nation and pagan king of the Mercians, who had slain his predecessor Edwin, at a place called in the English tongue Maserfelth, in the thirty-eighth year of his age, on the fifth day of the month of August.

How great his faith was towards God, and how remarkable his devotion, has been made evident by miracles even after his death; for, in the place where he was killed by the pagans, fighting for his country, sick men and cattle are frequently healed to this day. Whence it came to pass that many took up the very dust of the place where his body fell, and putting it into water, brought much relief with it to their friends who were sick. This custom came so much into use, that the earth being carried away by degrees, a hole was made as deep as the height of a man. Nor is it surprising that the sick should be healed in the place where he died; for, whilst he lived, he never ceased to provide for the poor and the sick, and to bestow alms on them, and assist them. Many miracles are said to have been wrought in that place, or with the dust carried from it; but we have thought it sufficient to mention two, which we have heard from our elders.

It happened, not long after his death, that a man was travelling on horseback near that place, when his horse on a sudden fell sick, stood still, hung his head, and foamed at the mouth, and, at length, as his pain increased, he fell to the ground; the rider dismounted, and taking off his saddle, waited to see whether the beast would recover or die. At length, after writhing for a long time in extreme anguish, the horse happened in his struggles to come to the very place where the great king died. Immediately the pain abated, the beast ceased from his frantic kicking, and, after the manner of horses, as if resting from his weariness, he rolled from side to side, and then starting up, perfectly

recovered, began to graze hungrily on the green herbage. The rider observing this, and being an intelligent man, concluded that there must be some wonderful sanctity in the place where the horse had been healed, and he marked the spot. After which he again mounted his horse, and went on to the inn where he intended to stop. On his arrival he found a girl, niece to the landlord, who had long been sick of the palsy; and when the members of the household, in his presence, lamented the girl's grievous calamity, he gave them an account of the place where his horse had been cured. In brief, she was put into a wagon and carried to the place and laid down there. At first she slept awhile, and when she awoke, found herself healed of her infirmity. Upon which she called for water, washed her face, arranged her hair, put a kerchief on her head, and returned home on foot, in good health, with those who had brought her.

CHAP. 10

Eodem tempore uenit alius quidam de natione Brettonum, ut ferunt, iter faciens iuxta ipsum locum, in quo praefata erat pugna conpleta; et uidit unius loci spatium cetero campo uiridius ac uenustius; coepitque sagaci animo conicere, quod nulla esset alia causa insolitae illo in loco uiriditatis, nisi quia ibidem sanctorum cetero exercitu uir aliquis fuisset interfectus. Tulit itaque de puluere terrae illius secum inligans in linteo, cogitans, quod futurum erat, quia ad medellam infirmantium idem puluis proficeret;

et pergens itinere suo peruenit ad uicum quandam uespere, intrauitque in domum, in qua uicani caenantes epulabantur; et susceptus a dominis domus, resedit et ipse cum eis ad conuiuium, adpendens linteolum cum puluere, quem adtulerat, in una posta parietis. Cumque diutius epulis atque ebrietati uacarent, accenso grandi igne in medio, contigit uolantibus in altum scintillis culmen domus, quod erat uirgis contextum, ac foeno tectum, subitaneis flammis impleri. Quod cum repente conuiuiae terrore confusi conspicerent, fugerunt foras nil ardenti domui et iamiamque periturae prodesse ualentes. Consumpta ergo domu flammis, posta solummodo, in qua puluis ille inclusus pendebat, tuta ab ignibus et intacta remansit. Qua uisa uirtute mirati sunt ualde; et perquirentes subtilius, inuenerunt, quia de illo loco adsumptus erat puluis, ubi regis Osualdi sanguis fuerat effusus. Quibus patefactis ac diffamatis longe lateque miraculis, multi per dies locum frequentare illum, et sanitatum ibi gratiam capere sibi suisque coeperunt.

Chap. X.

How the dust of that place prevailed against fire. [After 642 a.d.]

About the same time, another traveller, a Briton, as is reported, happened to pass by the same place, where the aforesaid battle was fought. Observing one particular spot of ground greener and more beautiful than any other part of the field, he had the wisdom to infer that the cause of the unusual greenness in that place must be that some person of greater holiness than any other in the army had been killed there. He therefore took along with him some of the dust of that piece of ground, tying it up in a linen cloth, supposing, as was indeed the case, that it would be of use for curing sick people, and proceeding on his journey, came in the evening to a certain village, and entered a house where the villagers were feasting at supper. Being received by the owners of the house, he sat down with them at the entertainment, hanging the cloth, with the dust which he had carried in it, on a post in the wall. They sat long at supper and drank deep. Now there was a great fire in the middle of the room, and it happened that the sparks flew up and caught the roof of the house, which being made of wattles and thatch, was suddenly wrapped in flames; the guests

ran out in panic and confusion, but they were not able to save the burning house, which was rapidly being destroyed. Wherefore the house was burnt down, and only that post on which the dust hung in the linen cloth remained safe and untouched by the fire. When they beheld this miracle, they were all amazed, and inquiring into it diligently, learned that the dust had been taken from the place where the blood of King Oswald had been shed. These wonderful works being made known and reported abroad, many began daily to resort to that place, and received the blessing of health for themselves and their friends.

CHAP. 11

Inter quae nequaquam silentio praetereundum reor, quid uirtutis ac miraculi caelestis fuerit ostensum, cum ossa eius inuenta, atque ad ecclesiam, in qua nunc seruantur, translata sunt.

Factum est autem hoc per industriam reginae Merciorum Osthrydae, quae erat filia fratris eius, id est Osuii, qui post illum regni apicem tenebat, ut in sequentibus dicemus.

Est monasterium nobile in prouincia Lindissi, nomine Beardaneu, quod eadem regina cum uiro suo Aedilredo multum diligebat, uenerabatur, excolebat, in quo desiderabat honoranda patruī sui ossa recondere.

Cumque uenisset carrum, in quo eadem ossa ducebantur, incumbente uespera, in monasterium praefatum, noluerunt ea, qui erant in monasterio, libenter excipere; quia etsi sanctum eum nouerant, tamen, quia de alia prouincia ortus fuerat, et super eos regnum acceperat, ueteranis eum odiis etiam mortuum insequiebantur. Unde factum est, ut ipsa nocte reliquiae adlatae foris permanerent, tentorio tantum maiore supra carrum, in quo inerant, extenso. Sed miraculi caelestis ostensio, quam reuerenter eae suscipiendae a cunctis fidelibus essent, patefecit. Nam tota ea nocte columna lucis a carro illo ad caelum usque porrecta, omnibus pene eiusdem Lindissa prouinciae locis conspicua stabat. Unde mane facto fratres monasterii illius, qui pridie abnuerant, diligenter ipsi petere coeperunt, ut apud se eadem sanctae ac Deo dilectae reliquiae conderentur. Lota igitur ossa intulerunt in thecam, quam in hoc praeparauerant, atque in ecclesia iuxta honorem congruum posuerunt;

et ut regia uiri sancti persona memoriam haberet aeternam, uexillum eius super tumbam auro et purpura conpositum adposuerunt, ipsamque aquam, in qua lauerant ossa, in angulo sacrarii fuderunt. Ex quo tempore factum est, ut ipsa terra, quae lauacrum uenerabile suscepit, ad abigendos ex obsessis corporibus daemones gratiae salutaris haberet effectum.

Denique tempore sequente, cum praefata regina in eodem monasterio moraretur, uenit ad salutandam eam abbatissa quaedam uenerabilis, quae usque hodie superest, uocabulo Aedilhild, soror uirorum sanctorum Aediluini et Alduini, quorum prior episcopus in Lindissi prouincia, secundus erat abbas in monasterio, quod uocatur Peartaneu, a quo non longe et illa monasterium habebat. Cum ergo ueniens illo loqueretur cum regina, atque inter alia, sermone de Osualdo exorto, diceret, quod et ipsa lucem nocte illa supra reliquias eius ad caelum usque altam uidisset, adiecit regina, quia de puluere pauimenti, in quo aqua lauacri illius effusa est, multi iam sanati essent infirmi. At illa petiit sibi portionem pulueris salutiferi dari; et accipiens inligatum panno condidit in capsella, et rediit. Transacto autem tempore aliquanto, cum esset in suo monasterio, uenit illic quidam hospes, qui solebat nocturnis

saepius horis repente ab immundo spiritu grauissime uexari. Qui cum benigne susceptus post caenam in lecto membra posuisset, subito a diabolo arreptus, clamare, dentibus frendere, spumare, et diuersis motibus coepit membra torquere. Cumque a nullo uel teneri uel ligari potuisset, cucurrit minister, et pulsans ad ostium nuntiauit abbatissae. At illa aperiens ianuam monasterii, exiuit ipsa cum una sanctimonialium feminarum ad locum uirorum, et euocans presbyterum, rogauit secum uenire ad patientem. Ubi cum uenientes uiderent multos adfuisse, qui uexatum tenere, et motus eius insanos comprimere conati nequaquam ualebant, dicebat presbyter exorcismos, et quaeque poterat, pro sedando miseri furore agebat. Sed nec ipse, quamuis multum laborans, proficere aliquid ualebat. Cumque nil salutis furenti superesse uideretur, repente uenit in mentem abbatissae puluis ille praefatus; statimque iussit ire ministram, et capsellam, in qua erat, adducere. Et cum illa adferens, quae iussa est, intraret atrium domus, in cuius interioribus daemoniosus torquebatur, conticuit ille subito, et quasi in somnum laxatus deposuit caput, membra in quietem omnia composuit.

‘Conticuere omnes, intentique ora tenebant,’

quem res exitum haberet, solliciti exspectantes. Et post aliquantum horae spatium resedit qui uexabatur, et grauiter suspirans: ‘Modo,’

inquit, ‘sanum sapio, recepi enim sensum animi mei.’ At illi sedulo sciscitabantur, quomodo hoc contigisset. Qui ait: ‘Mox ut uirgo haec cum capsella, quam portabat, adpropinquauit atrio domus huius, discessere omnes, qui me premebant, spiritus maligni, et me relicto nusquam conparuerunt.’ Tunc dedit ei abbatissa portiunculam de puluere illo, et sic data oratione a presbytero, noctein illam quietissimam duxit; neque aliquid ex eo tempore nocturni timoris aut uexationis ab antiquo hoste pertulit.

Chap. XI.

How a light from Heaven stood all night over his relics, and how those possessed with devils were healed by them. [679-697 a.d.]

Among the rest, I think we ought not to pass over in silence the miracles and signs from Heaven that were shown when King Oswald’s bones were found, and translated into the church where they are now preserved. This was done by the zealous care of Osthryth, queen of the Mercians, the daughter of his brother Oswy, who reigned after him, as shall be said hereafter.

There is a famous monastery in the province of Lindsey, called Beardaneu, which that queen and her husband Ethelred greatly loved and venerated, conferring upon it many honours. It was here that she was desirous to lay the revered bones of her uncle. When the wagon in which those bones were carried arrived towards evening at the aforesaid monastery, they that were in it were unwilling to admit them, because, though they knew him to be a holy

man, yet, as he was a native of another province, and had obtained the sovereignty over them, they retained their ancient aversion to him even after his death. Thus it came to pass that the relics were left in the open air all that night, with only a large tent spread over the wagon which contained them. But it was revealed by a sign from Heaven with how much reverence they ought to be received by all the faithful; for all that night, a pillar of light, reaching from the wagon up to heaven, was visible in almost every part of the province of Lindsey. Hereupon, in the morning, the brethren of that monastery who had refused it the day before, began themselves earnestly to pray that those holy relics, beloved of God, might be laid among them. Accordingly, the bones, being washed, were put into a shrine which they had made for that purpose, and placed in the church, with due honour; and that there might be a perpetual memorial of the royal character of this holy man, they hung up over the monument his banner of gold and purple. Then they poured out the water in which they had washed the bones, in a corner of the cemetery. From that time, the very earth which received that holy water, had the power of saving grace in casting out devils from the bodies of persons possessed.

Lastly, when the aforesaid queen afterwards abode some time in that monastery, there came to visit her a certain venerable abbess, who is still living, called Ethelhild, the sister of the holy men, Ethelwin and Aldwin, the first of whom was bishop in the province of Lindsey, the other abbot of the monastery of Peartaneu; not far from which was the monastery of Ethelhild. When this lady was come, in a conversation between her and the queen, the discourse, among other things, turning upon Oswald, she said, that she also had that night seen the light over his relics reaching up to heaven. The queen thereupon added, that the very dust of the pavement on which the water that washed the bones had been poured out, had already healed many sick persons. The abbess thereupon desired that some of that health-bringing dust might be given her, and, receiving it, she tied it up in a cloth, and, putting it into a casket, returned home. Some time after, when she was in her monastery, there came to it a guest, who was wont often in the night to be on a sudden grievously tormented with an unclean spirit; he being hospitably entertained, when he had gone to bed after supper, was suddenly seized by the Devil, and began to cry out, to gnash his teeth, to foam at the mouth, and to writhe and distort his limbs. None being able to hold or bind him, the servant ran, and knocking at the door, told the abbess. She, opening the monastery door, went out herself with one of the nuns to the men's apartment, and calling a priest, desired that he would go with her to the sufferer. Being come thither, and seeing many present, who had not been able, by their efforts, to hold the tormented person and restrain his convulsive movements, the priest used exorcisms, and did all that he could to assuage the madness of the unfortunate man, but, though he took much pains, he could not prevail. When no hope appeared of easing him in his ravings, the abbess bethought herself of the dust, and immediately bade her handmaiden go and fetch her the casket in

which it was. As soon as she came with it, as she had been bidden, and was entering the hall of the house, in the inner part whereof the possessed person was writhing in torment, he suddenly became silent, and laid down his head, as if he had been falling asleep, stretching out all his limbs to rest. "Silence fell upon all and intent they gazed," anxiously waiting to see the end of the matter. And after about the space of an hour the man that had been tormented sat up, and fetching a deep sigh, said, "Now I am whole, for I am restored to my senses." They earnestly inquired how that came to pass, and he answered, "As soon as that maiden drew near the hall of this house, with the casket she brought, all the evil spirits that vexed me departed and left me, and were no more to be seen." Then the abbess gave him a little of that dust, and the priest having prayed, he passed that night in great peace; nor was he, from that time forward, alarmed by night, or in any way troubled by his old enemy.

CHAP. 12

Sequente dehinc tempore fuit in eodem monasterio puerulus quidam, longo febrium incommodo grauiter uexatus. Qui cum die quadam sollicitus horam accessionis expectaret, ingressus ad eum quidam de fratribus: 'Uis,' inquit, 'mi nate, doceam te, quomodo cureris ab huius molestia langoris? Surge, ingredere ecclesiam, et accedens ad sepulchrum Osualdi, ibi reside, et quietus manens adhere tumbae.

Uide, ne ex eas inde, nec de loco mouearis, donec hora recessionis febrium transierit. Tunc ipse intrabo, et educam te inde.' Fecit, ut ille suaserat; sedentemque ad tumbam sancti infirmitas tangere nequaquam praesumsit; quin in tantum timens aufugit, ut nec secunda die, nec tertia, neque umquam exinde eum auderet contingere. Quod ita esse gestum, qui referebat mihi, frater inde adueniens adiecit, quod eo adhuc tempore, quo mecum loquebatur, superesset in eodem monasterio iam iuuenis ille, in quo tunc puero factum erat hoc miraculum sanitatis. Nec mirandum preces regis illius iam cum Domino regnantis multum ualere apud eum, qui temporalis regni quondam gubernacula tenens, magis pro aeterno regno semper laborare ac deprecari solebat.

Denique ferunt, quia a tempore matutinae laudis saepius ad diem usque in orationibus persteterit, atque ob crebrum morem orandi, siue gratias agendi Domino semper ubicumque sedens, supinas super genua sua manus habere solitus sit. Uulgatum est autem, et in consuetudinem prouerbii uersum, quod etiam inter uerba orationis uitam finierit. Nam cum armis et hostibus circumseptus iamiamque uideret se esse perimendum, orauit pro animabus exercitus sui. Unde dicunt in prouerbio: 'Deus miserere animabus, dixit Osuald cadens in terram.'

Ossa igitur illius translata et condita sunt in monasterio, quo diximus. Porro caput et manus cum brachiis a corpore praecisas iussit rex, qui occiderat, in stipitibus suspendi. Quo post annum deueniens cum exercitu successor regni eius Osuii abstulit ea, et caput quidem in cymiterio Lindisfarnensis ecclesiae, in regia uero ciuitate manus cum brachiis condidit.

Chap. XII.

How a little boy was cured of a fever at his tomb.

Some time after, there was a certain little boy in the said monastery, who had been long grievously troubled with a fever; he was one day anxiously expecting the hour when his fit was to come on, when one of the brothers, coming in to him, said, "Shall I tell you, my son, how you may be cured of this sickness? Rise, enter the church, and go close to Oswald's tomb; sit down and stay there quiet and do not leave it; do not come away, or stir from the

place, till the time is past, when the fever leaves you: then I will go in and fetch you away." The boy did as he was advised, and the disease durst not assail him as he sat by the saint's tomb; but fled in such fear that it did not dare to touch him, either the second or third day, or ever after. The brother that came from thence, and told me this, added, that at the time when he was talking with me, the young man was then still living in the monastery, on whom, when a boy, that miracle of healing had been wrought. Nor need we wonder that the prayers of that king who is now reigning with our Lord, should be very efficacious with Him, since he, whilst yet governing his temporal kingdom, was always wont to pray and labour more for that which is eternal. Nay, it is said, that he often continued in prayer from the hour of morning thanksgiving till it was day; and that by reason of his constant custom of praying or giving thanks to God, he was wont always, wherever he sat, to hold his hands on his knees with the palms turned upwards. It is also commonly affirmed and has passed into a proverb, that he ended his life in prayer; for when he was beset with the weapons of his enemies, and perceived that death was at hand, he prayed for the souls of his army. Whence it is proverbially said, "'Lord have mercy on their souls,' said Oswald, as he fell to the ground."

Now his bones were translated to the monastery which we have mentioned, and buried therein: but the king who slew him commanded his head, and hands, with the arms, to be cut off from the body, and set upon stakes. But his successor in the throne, Oswy, coming thither the next year with his army, took them down, and buried his head in the cemetery of the church of Lindisfarne, and the hands and arms in his royal city.

CHAP. 13

NEC solum inclyti fama uiri Britanniae fines lustrauit uniuersos, sed etiam trans oceanum longe radios salutiferae lucis spargens, Germaniae simul et Hiberniae partes attigit. Denique reuerentissimus antistes Acca solet referre, quia, cum Romam uadens, apud sanctissimum Fresonum gentis archiepiscopum Uilbrordum cum suo antistite Uilfrido moraretur, crebro eum audierit de mirandis, quae ad reliquias eiusdem reuerentissimi regis in illa prouincia gesta fuerint, narrare. Sed et in Hibernia cum presbyter adhuc peregrinam pro aeterna patria duceret uitam, rumorem sanctitatis illius in ea quoque insula longe lateque iam percrebuisse ferebat; e quibus unum, quod inter alia rettulit, miraculum praesenti nostrae historiae inserendum credidimus.

‘Tempore,’ inquit, ‘mortalitatis, quae Britanniam Hiberniamque lata strage uastauit, percussus est eiusdem clade pestis inter alios scolasticus quidam de genere Scottorum, doctus quidem uir studio litterarum, sed erga curam perpetuae suae saluationis nihil omnino studii et industriae gerens. Qui cum se morti proximum uideret, timere coepit et pauere, ne mox mortuus ob merita scelerum ad inferni claustra raperetur, clamauitque me, cum essem in uicinia positus, et inter egra tremens suspiria, flebili uoce talia mecum querebatur: “Uides,” inquit, “quia iamiamque crescente corporis molestia ad articulum subeundae mortis compellor; nec dubito me post mortem corporis statim ad perpetuam animae mortem rapiendum, ac infernalibus subdendum esse tormentis; quia tempore non pauco inter studia diuinae lectionis, uitiorum potius implicantis, quam diuinis solebam seruire mandatis. Inest autem animo, si mihi pietas superna aliqua uiuendi spatia donauerit, uitiosos mores corrigere, atque ad imperium diuinae uoluntatis totam ex integro mentem uitamque transferre. Uerum noui non hoc esse meriti mei, ut indutias uiuendi uel accipiam, uel me accepturum esse confidam, nisi forte misero mihi et indigno uenia, per auxilium eorum, qui illi fideliter seruierunt, propitiari dignatus fuerit. Audiuimus autem, et fama est creberrima, quia fuerit in gente uestra rex mirandae sanctitatis, uocabulo Osuald, cuius excellentia fidei et uirtutis, etiam post mortem, uirtutum frequentium operatione claruerit; precorque, si aliquid reliquiarum illius penes te habes, adferas mihi, si forte mihi Dominus per eius meritum misereri uoluerit.” At ego respondi: “Habeo quidem de ligno, in quo caput eius occisi a paganis infixum est; et, si firmo corde credideris, potest diuina pietas per tanti meritum uiri et huius uitae spatia longiora concedere, et ingressu te uitae perennis dignum reddere.” Nec moratus ille integram se in hoc habere fidem respondebat.

‘Tum benedixi aquam, et astulam roboris praefati inmittens obtuli egro potandum. Nec mora, melius habere coepit, et conualescens ab infirmitate, multo deinceps tempore uixit; totoque ad Deum corde et opere conuersus, omnibus, ubicumque perueniebat, clementiam pii Conditoris et fidelis eius

famuli gloriam praedicabat.’

Chap. XIII.

How a certain person in Ireland was restored, when at the point of death, by his relics.

Nor was the fame of the renowned Oswald confined to Britain, but, spreading rays of healing light even beyond the sea, reached also to Germany and Ireland. For the most reverend prelate, Acca, is wont to relate, that when, in his journey to Rome, he and his bishop Wilfrid stayed some time with Wilbrord, the holy archbishop of the Frisians, he often heard him tell of the wonders which had been wrought in that province at the relics of that most worshipful king. And he used to say that in Ireland, when, being yet only a priest, he led the life of a stranger and pilgrim for love of the eternal country, the fame of that king’s sanctity was already spread far and near in that island also. One of the miracles, among the rest, which he related, we have thought fit to insert in this our history.

“At the time,” said he, “of the plague which made such widespread havoc in Britain and Ireland, among others, a certain scholar of the Scottish race was smitten with the disease, a man learned in the study of letters, but in no way careful or studious of his eternal salvation; who, seeing his death near at hand, began to fear and tremble lest, as soon as he was dead, he should be hurried away to the prison-house of Hell for his sins. He called me, for I was near, and trembling and sighing in his weakness, with a lamentable voice made his complaint to me, after this manner: ‘You see that my bodily distress increases, and that I am now reduced to the point of death. Nor do I question but that after the death of my body, I shall be immediately snatched away to the everlasting death of my soul, and cast into the torments of hell, since for a long time, amidst all my reading of divine books, I have suffered myself to be ensnared by sin, instead of keeping the commandments of God. But it is my resolve, if the Divine Mercy shall grant me a new term of life, to correct my sinful habits, and wholly to devote anew my mind and life to obedience to the Divine will. But I know that I have no merits of my own whereby to obtain a prolongation of life, nor can I hope to have it, unless it shall please God to forgive me, wretched and unworthy of pardon as I am, through the help of those who have faithfully served him. We have heard, and the report is widespread, that there was in your nation a king, of wonderful sanctity, called Oswald, the excellency of whose faith and virtue has been made famous even after his death by the working of many miracles. I beseech you, if you have any relics of his in your keeping, that you will bring them to me; if haply the Lord shall be pleased, through his merits, to have mercy on me.’ I answered, ‘I have indeed a part of the stake on which his head was set up by the pagans, when he was killed, and if you believe with steadfast heart, the Divine mercy

may, through the merits of so great a man, both grant you a longer term of life here, and render you worthy to be admitted into eternal life.' He answered immediately that he had entire faith therein. Then I blessed some water, and put into it a splinter of the aforesaid oak, and gave it to the sick man to drink. He presently found ease, and, recovering of his sickness, lived a long time after; and, being entirely converted to God in heart and deed, wherever he went, he spoke of the goodness of his merciful Creator, and the honour of His faithful servant."

CHAP. 14

Translato ergo ad caelestia regna Osualdo, suscepit regni terrestris sedem pro eo frater eius Osuii, iuuenis XXX circiter annorum, et per annos XXVIII laboriosissime tenuit, inpugnatus uidelicet et ab ea, quae fratrem eius occiderat, pagana gente Merciorum, et a filio quoque suo Alchfrido, nec non et a fratrui, id est fratris sui, qui ante eum regnauit, filio Oidilualdo.

Cuius anno secundo, hoc est ab incarnatione dominica anno DCXLIII, reuerentissimus pater Paulinus, quondam quidem Eburacensis, sed tunc Hrofensis episcopus ciuitatis, transiuit ad Dominum sexto Iduum Octobrium die; qui X et VIII annos, menses duos, dies XXI episcopatum tenuit; sepultusque est in secretario beati apostoli Andreae, quod rex Aedilberct a fundamentis in eadem Hrofi ciuitate construxit. In cuius locum Honorius archiepiscopus ordinauit Ithamar, oriundum quidem de gente Cantuariorum, sed uita et eruditione antecessoribus suis aequandum. Habuit autem Osuii primis regni sui temporibus consortem regiae dignitatis, uocabulo Osuini, de stirpe regis Aeduini, hoc est filium Osrici, de quo supra rettulimus, uirum eximiae pietatis et religionis; qui prouinciae Derorum septem annis in maxima omnium rerum affluentia, et ipse amabilis omnibus praefuit. Sed nec cum eo ille, qui ceteram Transhumbranae gentis partem ab Aquilone, id est Berniciorum prouinciam, regebat, habere pacem potuit; quin potius, ingrauescentibus causis dissensionum, miserrima hunc caede peremit.

Siquidem congregato contra inuicem exercitu, cum uideret se Osuini cum illo, qui plures habebat auxilarios, non posse bello configere, ratus est utilius tunc demissa intentione bellandi, seruare se ad tempora meliora. Remisit ergo exercitum, quem congregauerat, ac singulos domum redire praecepit a loco, qui uocatur Uilfarasdun, id est mons Uilfari, et est a uico Cataractone X ferme milibus passuum contra solstitialem occasum secretus;

diuertitque ipse cum uno tantum milite sibi fidissimo, nomine Tondheri, celandus in domum comitis Hunualdi, quem etiam ipsum sibi amicissimum autumabat. Sed heu, pro dolor! longe aliter erat; nam ab eodem comite proditum eum Osuii cum praefato ipsius milite per praefectum suum Ediluinum detestanda omnibus morte interfecit. Quod factum est die XIIIa Kalendarum Septembrium, anno regni eius nono, in loco, qui dicitur Ingetlingum; ubi postmodum, castigandi huius facinoris gratia, monasterium constructum est; in quo pro utriusque regis, et occisi uidelicet, et eius, qui occidere iussit, animae redemptione cotidie Domino preces offerri deberent.

Erat autem rex Osuini et aspectu uenustus, et statura sublimis, et affatu iucundus, et moribus ciuilibus, et manu omnibus, id est nobilibus simul atque ignobilibus, largus; unde contigit, ut ob regiam eius et animi, et uultus, et meritorum dignitatem ab omnibus diligeretur, et undique ad eius ministerium de cunctis prope prouinciis uiri etiam nobilissimi concurrerent. Cuius inter

ceteras uirtutis et modestiae, et, ut ita dicam, specialis benedictionis glorias etiam maxima fuisse fertur humilitas, ut uno probare sat erit exemplo.

Donauerat equum optimum antistiti Aidano, in quo ille, quamuis ambulare solitus, uel amnium fluentia transire, uel si alia quaelibet necessitas insisteret, uiam peragere posset. Cui cum paruo interiecto tempore pauper quidam occurreret elimosynam petens, desiliens ille praecepit equum, ita ut erat stratus regaliter, pauperi dari; erat enim multum misericors, et cultor pauperum, ac uelut pater miserorum. Hoc cum regi esset relatum, dicebat episcopo, cum forte ingressuri essent ad prandium: ‘Quid uoluisti, domine antistes, equum regium, quem te conueniebat proprium habere, pauperi dare? Numquid non habuimus equos uiuiores plurimos, uel alias species, quae ad pauperum dona sufficerent, quamuis illum eis equum non dares, quem tibi specialiter possidendum elegi?’ Cui statim episcopus: ‘Quid loqueris,’ inquit, ‘rex? Numquid tibi carior est ille filius equae, quam ille filius Dei?’ Quibus dictis intrabant ad prandendum. Et episcopus quidem residebat in suo loco. Porro rex, uenerat enim de uenatu, coepit consistens ad focum calefieri cum ministris; et repente inter calefaciendum recordans uerbum, quod dixerat illi antistes, discinxit se gladio suo, et dedit illum ministro, festinusque accedens ante pedes episcopi conruit, postulans, ut sibi placatus esset, ‘quia numquam,’ inquit, ‘deinceps aliquid loquar de hoc aut iudicabo, quid uel quantum de pecunia nostra filiis Dei tribuas.’ Quod uidens episcopus, multum pertimuit, ac statim exurgens leuauit eum, promittens se multum illi esse placatum, dum modo ille residens ad epulas tristitiam deponeret.

Dumque rex, iubente ac postulante episcopo, laetitiam reciperet, coepit e contra episcopus tristis usque ad lacrimarum profusionem effici. Quem dum presbyter suus lingua patria, quam rex et domestici eius non nouerant, quare lacrimaretur, interrogasset: ‘Scio,’

inquit, ‘quia non multo tempore uicturus est rex; numquam enim ante haec uidi humilem regem. Unde animaduerto illum citius ex hac uita rapiendum; non enim digna est haec gens talem habere rectorem.’ Nec multo post dira antistitis praesagia tristi regis funere, de quo supra diximus, impleta sunt.

Sed et ipse antistes Aidan non plus quam XIIo post occisionem regis, quem amabat, die, id est pridie Kalendas Septembres, de saeculo ablati, perpetua laborum suorum a Domino praemia recepit.

Chap. XIV.

How on the death of Paulinus, Ithamar was made bishop of Rochester in his stead; and of the wonderful humility of King Oswin, who was cruelly slain by Oswy. [644-651 a.d.]

Oswald being translated to the heavenly kingdom, his brother Oswy, a young man of about thirty years of age, succeeded him on the throne of his earthly

kingdom, and held it twenty-eight years with much trouble, being attacked by the pagan nation of the Mercians, that had slain his brother, as also by his son Alchfrid, and by his nephew Oidilwald, the son of his brother who reigned before him. In his second year, that is, in the year of our Lord 644, the most reverend Father Paulinus, formerly Bishop of York, but at that time Bishop of the city of Rochester, departed to the Lord, on the 10th day of October, having held the office of a bishop nineteen years, two months, and twenty-one days; and was buried in the sacristy of the blessed Apostle Andrew, which King Ethelbert had built from the foundation, in the same city of Rochester. In his place, Archbishop Honorius ordained Ithamar, of the Kentish nation, but not inferior to his predecessors in learning and conduct of life.

Oswy, during the first part of his reign, had a partner in the royal dignity called Oswin, of the race of King Edwin, and son to Osric of whom we have spoken above, a man of wonderful piety and devotion, who governed the province of the Deiri seven years in very great prosperity, and was himself beloved by all men. But Oswy, who governed all the other northern part of the nation beyond the Humber, that is, the province of the Bernicians, could not live at peace with him; and at last, when the causes of their disagreement increased, he murdered him most cruelly. For when each had raised an army against the other, Oswin perceived that he could not maintain a war against his enemy who had more auxiliaries than himself, and he thought it better at that time to lay aside all thoughts of engaging, and to reserve himself for better times. He therefore disbanded the army which he had assembled, and ordered all his men to return to their own homes, from the place that is called Wilfaraesdun, that is, Wilfar's Hill, which is about ten miles distant from the village called Cataract, towards the north-west. He himself, with only one trusty thegn, whose name was Tondhere, withdrew and lay concealed in the house of Hunwald, a noble, whom he imagined to be his most assured friend. But, alas! it was far otherwise; for Hunwald betrayed him, and Oswy, by the hands of his reeve, Ethilwin, foully slew him and the thegn aforesaid. This happened on the 20th of August, in the ninth year of his reign, at a place called Ingetlingum, where afterwards, to atone for this crime, a monastery was built, wherein prayers should be daily offered up to God for the redemption of the souls of both kings, to wit, of him that was murdered, and of him that commanded the murder.

King Oswin was of a goodly countenance, and tall of stature, pleasant in discourse, and courteous in behaviour; and bountiful to all, gentle and simple alike; so that he was beloved by all men for the royal dignity of his mind and appearance and actions, and men of the highest rank came from almost all provinces to serve him. Among all the graces of virtue and moderation by which he was distinguished and, if I may say so, blessed in a special manner, humility is said to have been the greatest, which it will suffice to prove by one instance.

He had given a beautiful horse to Bishop Aidan, to use either in crossing rivers, or in performing a journey upon any urgent necessity, though the Bishop was wont to travel ordinarily on foot. Some short time after, a poor man meeting the Bishop, and asking alms, he immediately dismounted, and ordered the horse, with all his royal trappings, to be given to the beggar; for he was very compassionate, a great friend to the poor, and, in a manner, the father of the wretched. This being told to the king, when they were going in to dinner, he said to the Bishop, "What did you mean, my lord Bishop, by giving the poor man that royal horse, which it was fitting that you should have for your own use? Had not we many other horses of less value, or things of other sorts, which would have been good enough to give to the poor, instead of giving that horse, which I had chosen and set apart for your own use?" Thereupon the Bishop answered, "What do you say, O king? Is that son of a mare more dear to you than that son of God?" Upon this they went in to dinner, and the Bishop sat in his place; but the king, who had come in from hunting, stood warming himself, with his attendants, at the fire. Then, on a sudden, whilst he was warming himself, calling to mind what the bishop had said to him, he ungirt his sword, and gave it to a servant, and hastened to the Bishop and fell down at his feet, beseeching him to forgive him; "For from this time forward," said he, "I will never speak any more of this, nor will I judge of what or how much of our money you shall give to the sons of God." The bishop was much moved at this sight, and starting up, raised him, saying that he was entirely reconciled to him, if he would but sit down to his meat, and lay aside all sorrow. The king, at the bishop's command and request, was comforted, but the bishop, on the other hand, grew sad and was moved even to tears. His priest then asking him, in the language of his country, which the king and his servants did not understand, why he wept, "I know," said he, "that the king will not live long; for I never before saw a humble king; whence I perceive that he will soon be snatched out of this life, because this nation is not worthy of such a ruler." Not long after, the bishop's gloomy foreboding was fulfilled by the king's sad death, as has been said above. But Bishop Aidan himself was also taken out of this world, not more than twelve days after the death of the king he loved, on the 31st of August, to receive the eternal reward of his labours from the Lord.

CHAP. 15

Qui cuius meriti fuerit, etiam miraculorum signis internus arbiter edocuit, e quibus tria memoriae causa ponere satis sit.

Presbyter quidam, nomine Utta, multae grauitatis ac ueritatis uir, et ob id omnibus, etiam ipsis principibus saeculi honorabilis, cum mitteretur Cantiam ob adducendam inde coniugem regi Osuio, filiam uidelicet Aduini regis Eanfledam, quae occiso patre illuc fuerat adducta; qui terrestri quidem itinere illo uenire, sed nauigio cum uirgine redire disponebat, accessit ad episcopum Aidanum, obsecrans eum pro se suisque, qui tantum iter erant adgressuri, Domino supplicare. Qui benedicens illos ac Domino commendans, dedit etiam oleum sanctificatum: ‘Scio,’ inquit, ‘quia, ubi nauem ascenderitis, tempestas uobis, et uentus contrarius superueniet; sed tu memento, ut hoc oleum, quod tibi do, mittas in mare; et statim quiescentibus uentis, serenitas maris uos laeta prosequetur, ac cupito itinere domum remittet.’ Quae cuncta, ut praedixerat antistes, ex ordine completa sunt; et quidem inprimis furentibus undis pelagi, temtabant nautae anchoris in mare missis nauem retinere, neque hoc agentes aliquid proficiebant. Cumque uerrentibus undique et inplere incipientibus nauem fluctibus, mortem sibi omnes imminere, et iamiamque adesse uiderent, tandem presbyter reminiscens uerba antistitis, adsumta ampulla misit de oleo in pontum, et statim, ut praedictum erat, suo quieuit a feruore. Sicque factum est, ut uir Dei et per prophetiae spiritum tempestatem praedixerit futuram, et per uirtutem eiusdem spiritus hanc exortam, quamuis corporaliter absens, sopiuerit. Cuius ordinem miraculi non quilibet dubius relator, sed fidelissimus mihi nostrae ecclesiae presbyter, Cynimund uocabulo, narrauit, qui se hoc ab ipso Utta presbytero, in quo et per quem completum est, audisse perhibebat.

Chap. XV.

How Bishop Aidan foretold to certain seamen that a storm would arise, and gave them some holy oil to calm it. [Between 642 and 645 a.d.]

How great the merits of Aidan were, was made manifest by the Judge of the heart, with the testimony of miracles, whereof it will suffice to mention three, that they may not be forgotten. A certain priest, whose name was Utta, a man of great weight and sincerity, and on that account honoured by all men, even the princes of the world, was sent to Kent, to bring thence, as wife for King Oswy, Eanfled, the daughter of King Edwin, who had been carried thither when her father was killed. Intending to go thither by land, but to return with the maiden by sea, he went to Bishop Aidan, and entreated him to offer up his prayers to the Lord for him and his company, who were then to set out on so long a journey. He, blessing them, and commending them to the Lord, at the

same time gave them some holy oil, saying, "I know that when you go on board ship, you will meet with a storm and contrary wind; but be mindful to cast this oil I give you into the sea, and the wind will cease immediately; you will have pleasant calm weather to attend you and send you home by the way that you desire."

All these things fell out in order, even as the bishop had foretold. For first, the waves of the sea raged, and the sailors endeavoured to ride it out at anchor, but all to no purpose; for the sea sweeping over the ship on all sides and beginning to fill it with water, they all perceived that death was at hand and about to overtake them. The priest at last, remembering the bishop's words, laid hold of the phial and cast some of the oil into the sea, which at once, as had been foretold, ceased from its uproar. Thus it came to pass that the man of God, by the spirit of prophecy, foretold the storm that was to come to pass, and by virtue of the same spirit, though absent in the body, calmed it when it had arisen. The story of this miracle was not told me by a person of little credit, but by Cynimund, a most faithful priest of our church, who declared that it was related to him by Utta, the priest, in whose case and through whom the same was wrought.

CHAP. 16

Aluid eiusdem patris memorabile miraculum ferunt multi, qui nosse potuerunt. Nam tempore episcopatus eius, hostilis Merciorum exercitus Penda duce Nordanhymbrorum regiones impia clade longe lateque deuastans peruenit ad urbem usque regiam, quae ex Bebbae quondam reginae uocabulo cognominatur, eamque, quia neque armis neque obsidione capere poterat, flammis absumere conatus est;

discissisque uiculis, quos in uicinia urbis inuenit, aduexit illo plurimam congeriem trabium, tignorum, parietum, uirgeorum, et tecti fenei, et his urbem in magna altitudine circumdedit a parte, quae terrae est contigua, et dum uentum opportunum cerneret, inlato igne conburere urbem nisus est. Quo tempore reuerentissimus antistes Aidan in insula Farne, quae duobus ferme milibus passuum ab urbe procul abest, morabatur. Illo enim saepius secretae orationis et silentii causa secedere consuevit; denique usque hodie locum sedis illius solitariae in eadem insula solent ostendere. Qui cum uentis ferentibus globos ignis ac fumum supra muros urbis exaltari conspiceret, fertur eleuatis ad caelum oculis manibusque cum lacrimis dixisse: ‘Uide, Domine, quanta mala facit Penda.’ Quo dicto statim mutati ab urbe uenti in eos, qui accenderant, flammarum incendia retorserunt, ita ut aliquot laesi, omnes terrii, inpugnare ultra urbem cessarent, quam diuinitus iuuari cognouerant.

Chap. XVI.

How the same Aidan, by his prayers, saved the royal city when it was fired by the enemy [Before 651 a.d.]

Another notable miracle of the same father is related by many such as were likely to have knowledge thereof; for during the time that he was bishop, the hostile army of the Mercians, under the command of Penda, cruelly ravaged the country of the Northumbrians far and near, even to the royal city, which has its name from Bebb, formerly its queen. Not being able to take it by storm or by siege, he endeavoured to burn it down; and having pulled down all the villages in the neighbourhood of the city, he brought thither an immense quantity of beams, rafters, partitions, wattles and thatch, wherewith he encompassed the place to a great height on the land side, and when he found the wind favourable, he set fire to it and attempted to burn the town.

At that time, the most reverend Bishop Aidan was dwelling in the Isle of Farne, which is about two miles from the city; for thither he was wont often to retire to pray in solitude and silence; and, indeed, this lonely dwelling of his is to this day shown in that island. When he saw the flames of fire and the smoke carried by the wind rising above the city walls, he is said to have lifted up his eyes and hands to heaven, and cried with tears, “Behold, Lord, how great evil

is wrought by Penda!” These words were hardly uttered, when the wind immediately veering from the city, drove back the flames upon those who had kindled them, so that some being hurt, and all afraid, they forebore any further attempts against the city, which they perceived to be protected by the hand of God.

CHAP. 17

Hunc cum dies mortis egredi e corpore cogeret, conpletis annis episcopatus sui XVII erat in uilla regia non longe ab urbe, de qua praefati sumus. In hac enim habens ecclesiam et cubiculum, saepius ibidem diuerſi ac manere, atque inde ad praedicandum circumquaque exire consueuerat; quod ipsum et in aliis uillis regiis facere solebat, utpote nil propriae possessionis, excepta ecclesia sua et adiacentibus agellis habens. Tetenderunt ergo ei egrotanti tentorium ad occidentalem ecclesiae partem, ita ut ipsum tentorium parieti hereret ecclesiae. Unde factum est, ut adclinis destinae, quae extrinsecus ecclesiae pro munimine erat adposita, spiritum uitae exhalaret ultimum. Obiit autem septimo decimo episcopatus sui anno, pridie Kalendarum Septembrium. Cuius corpus mox inde translatum ad insulam Lindisfarnensium, atque in cymiterio fratrum sepultum est. At interiecto tempore aliquanto, cum fabricata esset ibi basilica maior, atque in honorem beatissimi apostolorum principis dedicata, illo ossa eius translata, atque ad dexteram altaris iuxta uenerationem tanto pontifice dignam condita sunt.

Successit uero ei in episcopatum Finan, et ipse illo ab Hii Scottorum insula ac monasterio destinatus, ac tempore non pauco in episcopatu permansit. Contigit autem post aliquot annos, ut Penda Merciorum rex cum hostili exercitu haec in loca perueniens, cum cuncta, quae poterat, ferro flammaque perderet, uicus quoque ille, in quo antistes obiit, una cum ecclesia memorata flammis absumeretur. Sed mirum in modum sola illa destina, cui incumbens obiit, ab ignibus circum cuncta uorantibus absumi non potuit. Quo clarescente miraculo, mox ibidem ecclesia restaurata, et haec eadem destina in munimentum est parietis, ut ante fuerat, forinsecus adposita. Rursumque peracto tempore aliquanto, euenit per culpam incuriae uicum eundem et ipsam pariter ecclesiam ignibus consumi.

Sed ne tunc quidem eandem tangere flamma destinam ualebat; et cum magno utique miraculo ipsa eius foramina ingrediens, quibus aedificio erat adfixa, perederet, ipsam tamen ledere nullatenus sinebatur. Unde tertio aedificata ibi ecclesia, destinam illam non, ut antea, deforis in fulcimentum domus adposuerunt, sed intro ipsam ecclesiam in memoriam miraculi posuerunt, ubi intrantes genu flectere, ac misericordiae caelesti supplicare deberent. Constatque multos ex eo tempore gratiam sanitatis in eodem loco consecutos;

quin etiam astulis ex ipsa destina excisis, et in aquam missis, plures sibi suisque langorum remedia conquisiere.

Scripsi autem haec de persona et operibus uiri praefati; nequaquam in eo laudans aut eligens hoc, quod de obseruatione paschae minus perfecte sapiebat; immo hoc multum detestans, sicut in libro, quem de temporibus composui, manifestissime probaui; sed quasi uerax historicus, simpliciter ea,

quae de illo siue per illum sunt gesta, describens, et quae laude sunt digna in eius actibus laudans, atque ad utilitatem legentium memoriae commendans; studium uidelicet pacis et caritatis, continentiae et humilitatis; animum irae et auaritiae uictorem, superbiae simul et uanae gloriae contemptorem; industriam faciendi simul et docendi mandata caelestia, solertiam lectionis et uigiliarum, auctoritatem sacerdote dignam, redarguendi superbos ac potentes, pariter et infirmos consolandi, ac pauperes recreandi uel defendendi clementiam. Qui, ut breuiter multa conprehendam, quantum ab eis, qui illum nouere, didicimus, nil ex omnibus, quae in euangelicis uel apostolicis siue propheticis litteris facienda cognouerat, praetermittere, sed cuncta pro suis uiribus operibus explere curabat. Haec in praefato antistite multum conplector et amo, quia nimirum haec Deo placuisse non ambigo. Quod autem pascha non suo tempore obseruabat, uel canonicum eius tempus ignorans, uel suae gentis auctoritate ne agnitum sequeretur deuictus, non adprobo nec laudo. In quo tamen hoc adprobo, quia in celebratione sui paschae non aliud corde tenebat, uenerabatur, et praedicabat, quam quod nos; id est, redemptionem generis humani per passionem, resurrectionem, ascensionem in caelos mediatoris Dei et hominum hominis Iesu Christi. Unde et hanc non, ut quidam falso opinantur, XIIIa luna in qualibet feria cum Iudaeis, sed die dominica semper agebat, a luna XIIIa usque ad XXam; propter fidem uidelicet dominicae resurrectionis, quam una sabbati factam, propterque spem nostrae resurrectionis, quam eadem una sabbati, quae nunc dominica dies dicitur, ueraciter futuram cum sancta ecclesia credebat.

Chap. XVII.

How a prop of the church on which Bishop Aidan was leaning when he died, could not be consumed when the rest of the Church was on fire; and concerning his inward life. [651 a.d.]

Aidan was in the king's township, not far from the city of which we have spoken above, at the time when death caused him to quit the body, after he had been bishop sixteen years; for having a church and a chamber in that place, he was wont often to go and stay there, and to make excursions from it to preach in the country round about, which he likewise did at other of the king's townships, having nothing of his own besides his church and a few fields about it. When he was sick they set up a tent for him against the wall at the west end of the church, and so it happened that he breathed his last, leaning against a buttress that was on the outside of the church to strengthen the wall. He died in the seventeenth year of his episcopate, on the 31st of August. His body was thence presently translated to the isle of Lindisfarne, and buried in the cemetery of the brethren. Some time after, when a larger church was built there and dedicated in honour of the blessed prince of the Apostles, his bones were translated thither, and laid on the right side of the altar, with the respect due to so great a prelate.

Finan, who had likewise been sent thither from Hii, the island monastery of the Scots, succeeded him, and continued no small time in the bishopric. It happened some years after, that Penda, king of the Mercians, coming into these parts with a hostile army, destroyed all he could with fire and sword, and the village where the bishop died, along with the church above mentioned, was burnt down; but it fell out in a wonderful manner that the buttress against which he had been leaning when he died, could not be consumed by the fire which devoured all about it. This miracle being noised abroad, the church was soon rebuilt in the same place, and that same buttress was set up on the outside, as it had been before, to strengthen the wall. It happened again, some time after, that the village and likewise the church were carelessly burned down the second time. Then again, the fire could not touch the buttress; and, miraculously, though the fire broke through the very holes of the nails wherewith it was fixed to the building, yet it could do no hurt to the buttress itself. When therefore the church was built there the third time, they did not, as before, place that buttress on the outside as a support of the building, but within the church, as a memorial of the miracle; where the people coming in might kneel, and implore the Divine mercy. And it is well known that since then many have found grace and been healed in that same place, as also that by means of splinters cut off from the buttress, and put into water, many more have obtained a remedy for their own infirmities and those of their friends.

I have written thus much concerning the character and works of the aforesaid Aidan, in no way commending or approving his lack of wisdom with regard to the observance of Easter; nay, heartily detesting it, as I have most manifestly proved in the book I have written, "*De Temporibus*"; but, like an impartial historian, unreservedly relating what was done by or through him, and commending such things as are praiseworthy in his actions, and preserving the memory thereof for the benefit of the readers; to wit, his love of peace and charity; of continence and humility; his mind superior to anger and avarice, and despising pride and vainglory; his industry in keeping and teaching the Divine commandments, his power of study and keeping vigil; his priestly authority in reproving the haughty and powerful, and at the same time his tenderness in comforting the afflicted, and relieving or defending the poor. To be brief, so far as I have learnt from those that knew him, he took care to neglect none of those things which he found in the Gospels and the writings of Apostles and prophets, but to the utmost of his power endeavoured to fulfil them all in his deeds.

These things I greatly admire and love in the aforesaid bishop, because I do not doubt that they were pleasing to God; but I do not approve or praise his observance of Easter at the wrong time, either through ignorance of the canonical time appointed, or, if he knew it, being prevailed on by the authority of his nation not to adopt it. Yet this I approve in him, that in the celebration of his Easter, the object which he had at heart and revered and preached

was the same as ours, to wit, the redemption of mankind, through the Passion, Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven of the Man Christ Jesus, who is the mediator between God and man. And therefore he always celebrated Easter, not as some falsely imagine, on the fourteenth of the moon, like the Jews, on any day of the week, but on the Lord's day, from the fourteenth to the twentieth of the moon; and this he did from his belief that the Resurrection of our Lord happened on the first day of the week, and for the hope of our resurrection, which also he, with the holy Church, believed would truly happen on that same first day of the week, now called the Lord's day.

CHAP. 18

His temporibus regno Orientalium Anglorum, post Erpualdum Redualdi successorem, Sigberct frater eius praefuit, homo bonus ac religiosus; qui dudum in Gallia, dum inimicitias Redualdi fugiens exularet, lauacrum baptismi percepit, et patriam reuersus, ubi regno potitus est, mox ea, quae in Galliis bene disposita uidit, imitari cupiens, instituit scolam, in qua pueri litteris erudirentur;

iuuante se episcopo Felice, quem de Cantia acceperat, eisque pedagogos ac magistros iuxta morem Cantuariorum praebente.

Tantumque rex ille caelestis regni amator factus est, ut ad ultimum, relictis regni negotiis, et cognato suo Ecgrice commendatis, qui et antea partem eiusdem regni tenebat, intraret monasterium, quod sibi fecerat, atque accepta tonsura pro aeterno magis regno militare curaret. Quod dum multo tempore faceret, contigit gentem Merciorum duce rege Penda aduersus Orientales Anglos in bellum procedere, qui, dum se inferiores in bello hostibus conspicerent, rogauerunt Sigberctum ad confirmandum militem secum uenire in proelium. Illo nolente ac contradicente, inuitum monasterio eruentes duxerunt in certamen, sperantes minus animos militum trepidare, minus praesente duce quondam strenuissimo et eximio posse fugam meditari. Sed ipse professionis suae non inmemor, dum opimo esset uallatus exercitu, nonnisi uirgam tantum habere in manu uoluit: occisusque est una cum rege Ecgrice, et cunctus eorum, insistentibus paganis, caesus siue dispersus exercitus.

Successor autem regni eorum factus est Anna filius Eni de regio genere, uir optimus, atque optimae genitor sobolis, de quibus in sequentibus suo tempore dicendum est; qui et ipse postea ab eodem pagano Merciorum duce, a quo et prodecessores eius, occisus est.

Chap. XVIII.

Of the life and death of the religious King Sigbert. [*Circ. 631 a.d.*]

At this time, the kingdom of the East Angles, after the death of Earpwald, the successor of Redwald, was governed by his brother Sigbert, a good and religious man, who some time before had been baptized in Gaul, whilst he lived in banishment, a fugitive from the enmity of Redwald. When he returned home, as soon as he ascended the throne, being desirous to imitate the good institutions which he had seen in Gaul, he founded a school wherein boys should be taught letters, and was assisted therein by Bishop Felix, who came to him from Kent, and who furnished them with masters and teachers after the manner of the people of Kent.

This king became so great a lover of the heavenly kingdom, that at last, quitting the affairs of his kingdom, and committing them to his kinsman Ecgric, who before had a share in that kingdom, he entered a monastery, which he had built for himself, and having received the tonsure, applied himself rather to do battle for a heavenly throne. A long time after this, it happened that the nation of the Mercians, under King Penda, made war on the East Angles; who finding themselves no match for their enemy, entreated Sigbert to go with them to battle, to encourage the soldiers. He was unwilling and refused, upon which they drew him against his will out of the monastery, and carried him to the army, hoping that the soldiers would be less afraid and less disposed to flee in the presence of one who had formerly been an active and distinguished commander. But he, still mindful of his profession, surrounded, as he was, by a royal army, would carry nothing in his hand but a wand, and was killed with King Ecgric; and the pagans pressing on, all their army was either slaughtered or dispersed.

They were succeeded in the kingdom by Anna, the son of Eni, of the blood royal, a good man, and the father of good children, of whom, in the proper place, we shall speak hereafter. He also was afterwards slain like his predecessors by the same pagan chief of the Mercians.

CHAP. 19

Uerum dum adhuc Sigberct regni infulas teneret, superuenit de Hibernia uir sanctus nomine Furseus, uerbo et actibus clarus, sed et egregiis insignis uirtutibus, cupiens pro Domino, ubicumque sibi oportuno inueniret, peregrinam ducere uitam. Qui cum ad prouinciam Orientalium peruenisset Anglorum, susceptus est honorifice a rege praefato, et solitum sibi opus euangelizandi exsequens, multos et exemplo uirtutis, et incitamento sermonis, uel incredulos ad Christum conuertit, uel iam credentes amplius in fide atque amore Christi confirmauit.

Ubi quadam infirmitate corporis arreptus, angelica meruit uisione perfrui, in qua admonitus est coepto uerbi ministerio sedulus insistere, uigiliisque consuetis et orationibus indefessus incumbere; eo quod certus sibi exitus, sed incerta eiusdem exitus esset hora futura, dicente Domino: ‘Uigilate itaque, quia nescitis diem neque horam.’ Qua uisione confirmatus, curauit locum monasterii, quem a praefato rege Sigbercto acceperat, uelocissime construere, ac regularibus instituere disciplinis. Erat autem monasterium siluarum et maris uicinitate amoenum, constructum in castro quodam, quod lingua Anglorum Cnobheresburg, id est urbs Cnobheri, uocatur; quod deinde rex prouinciae illius Anna ac nobiles quique augustioribus aedificiis ac donariis adornarunt.

Erat autem uir iste de nobilissimo genere Scottorum, sed longe animo quam carne nobilior. Ab ipso tempore pueritiae suae curam non modicam lectionibus sacris simul et monasticis exhibebat disciplinis, et, quod maxime sanctos decet, cuncta, quae agenda didicerat, sollicitus agere curabat.

Quid multa? Procedente tempore et ipse sibi monasterium, in quo liberius caelestibus studiis uacaret, construxit; ubi correptus infirmitate, sicut libellus de uita eius conscriptus sufficienter edocet, raptus est e corpore; et a uespera usque ad galli cantum corpore exutus, angelicorum agminum et aspectus intueri, et laudes beatas meruit audire. Referre autem erat solitus, quod aperte eos inter alia resonare audiret: ‘Ibunt sancti de uirtute in uirtutem’;

et iterum: ‘Uidebitur Deus deorum in Sion.’ Qui reductus in corpore, et die tertia rursum eductus, uidit non solum maiora beatorum gaudia, sed et maxima malignorum spirituum certamina, qui crebris accusationibus inprobi iter illi caeleste intercludere contendebant;

nec tamen, protegentibus eum angelis, quicquam proficiebant. De quibus omnibus siqui plenius scire uult (id est, quanta fraudis solertia daemones et actus eius, et uerba superflua, et ipsas etiam cogitationes quasi in libro descriptas replicauerint; quae ab angelis sanctis, quae a uiris iustis sibi inter angelos apparentibus laeta uel tristia cognouerit), legat ipsum, de quo dixi, libellum uitae eius, et multum ex illo, ut reor, profectus spiritalis accipiet.

In quibus tamen unum est, quod et nos in hac historia ponere multis commodum duximus. Cum ergo in altum esset elatus, iussus est ab angelis, qui eum ducebant, respicere, in mundum. At ille oculos in inferiora deflectens, uidit quasi uallem tenebrosam subtus se in imo positam. Uidit et quattuor ignes in aere non multo ab inuicem spatio distantes. Et interrogans angelos, qui essent hi ignes, audiuit hos esse ignes, qui mundum succedentes essent consumturi. Unum mendacii, cum hoc, quod in baptismo abrenuntiare nos Satanae et omnibus operibus eius promissimus, minime inplemus; alterum cupiditatis, cum mundi diuitias amorī caelestium praeponimus;

tertium dissensionis, cum animos proximorum etiam in superuacuis rebus offendere non formidamus; quartum impietatis, cum infirmiores spoliare et eis fraudem facere pro nihilo ducimus. Crescentes uero paulatim ignes usque ad inuicem sese extenderunt, atque in inmensam adunati sunt flammam. Cumque adpropinquassent, pertimescens ille dicit angelo: ‘Domine, ecce ignis mihi adpropinquat.’ At ille: ‘Quod non incendisti,’ inquit, ‘non ardebit in te; nam etsi terribilis iste ac grandis esse rogus uidetur, tamen iuxta merita operum singulos examinat; quia uniuscuiusque cupiditas in hoc igni ardebit.

Sicut enim quis ardet in corpore per illicitam uoluptatem, ita solutus corpore ardebit per debitam poenam.’ Tunc uidit unum de tribus angelis, qui sibi in tota utraque uisione ductores adfuerunt, praecedentem ignes flammae diuidere, et duos ab utroque latere circumuolantes ab ignium se periculo defendere. Uidit autem et daemones per ignem uolantes incendia bellorum contra iustos struere.

Sequuntur aduersus ipsum accusationes malignorum, defensiones spirituum bonorum, copiosior caelestium agminum uisio; sed et uirorum de sua natione sanctorum, quos olim sacerdotii gradu non ignobiler potitos, fama iam uulgante, conpererat; a quibus non pauca, quae uel ipsi, uel omnibus, qui audire uellent, multum salubria essent, audiuit. Qui cum uerba finissent, et cum angelicis spiritibus ipsi quoque ad caelos redirent, remanserunt cum beato Furseo tres angeli, de quibus diximus, qui eum ad corpus referrent.

Cumque praefato igni maximo adpropiaerent, diuisit quidem angelus, sicut prius, ignem flammae. Sed uir Dei ubi ad patefactam usque inter flammās ianuam peruenit, arripientes inmundi spiritus unum de eis, quos in ignibus torrebant, iactauerunt in eum, et contingentes humerum maxillamque eius incenderunt; cognouitque hominem, et, quia uestimentum eius morientis acceperit, ad memoriam reduxit. Quem angelus sanctus statim adprehendens in ignem reiecit. Dicebatque hostis malignus: ‘Nolite repellere, quem ante suscepistis; nam sicut bona eius peccatoris suscepistis, ita et de poenis eius participes esse debetis.’ Contradicens angelus: ‘Non,’ inquit, ‘propter auaritiam, sed propter saluandam eius animam suscepit’; cessauitque ignis. Et conuersus ad eum angelus: ‘Quod incendisti,’ inquit, ‘hoc arsit in te. Si enim huius uiri in peccatis suis mortui pecuniam non accepisses, nec poena eius in

te arderet.' Et plura locutus, quid erga salutem eorum, qui ad mortem poeniterent, esset agendum, salubri sermone docuit. Qui postmodum in corpore restitutus, omni uitae suae tempore signum incendii, quod in anima pertulit, uisibile cunctis in humero maxillaque portauit; mirumque in modum, quid anima in occulto passa sit, caro palam praemonstrabat. Curabat autem semper, sicut et antea facere consuerat, omnibus opus uirtutum et exemplis ostendere, et praedicare sermonibus. Ordinem autem uisionum suarum illis solummodo, qui propter desiderium conpunctionis interrogabant, exponere uolebat. Superest adhuc frater quidam senior monasterii nostri, qui narrare solet dixisse sibi quendam multum ueracem ac religiosum hominem, quod ipsum Furseum uiderit in prouincia Orientalium Anglorum, illasque uisiones ex ipsius ore audierit; adiciens, quia tempus hiemis fuerit acerrimum et glacie constrictum, cum sedens in tenui ueste uir ita inter dicendum, propter magnitudinem memorati timoris uel suauitatis, quasi in mediae aetatis caumate sudauerit.

Cum ergo, ut ad superiora redeamus, multis annis in Scottia uerbum Dei omnibus adnuntians, tumultus inruentium barbarum non facile ferret, relictis omnibus, quae habere uidebatur, ab ipsa quoque insula patria discessit; et paucis cum fratribus per Brettones in prouinciam Anglorum deuenit, ibique praedicans uerbum, ut diximus, monasterium nobile construxit. Quibus rite gestis, cupiens se ab omnibus saeculi huius. et ipsius quoque monasterii negotiis alienare, reliquit monasterii et animarum curam fratri suo Fullano, et presbyteris Gobbano et Dicullo, et ipse ab omnibus mundi rebus liber in anchoretica conuersatione uitam finire disposuit. Habuit alterum fratrem uocabulo Ultanum, qui de monasterii probatione diuturna ad heremiticam peruenerat uitam. Hunc ergo solus petens, annum totum cum eo in continentia et orationibus, in cotidianis manuum uixit laboribus.

Dein turbatam incursione gentilium prouinciam uidens, et monasteriis quoque periculum imminere praeuidens, dimissis ordinate omnibus nauigauit Galliam, ibique a rege Francorum Hloduio uel patricio Ercunualdo honorifice susceptus, monasterium construxit in loco Latineaco nominato, ac non multo post infirmitate correptus diem clausit ultimum. Cuius corpus idem Ercunualdus patricius accipiens, seruauit in porticu quodam ecclesiae, quam in uilla sua, cui nomen est Perrona, faciebat, donec ipsa ecclesia dedicaretur. Quod dum post dies XXVII esset factum, et corpus ipsum de porticu ablatum prope altare esset recondendum, inuentum est ita inlesum, ac si eadem hora de hac luce fuisset egressus. Sed et post annos III, constructa domuncula cultiore receptui corporis eiusdem, ad orientem altaris, adhuc sine macula corruptionis inuentum, ibidem digno cum honore translatus est; ubi merita illius multis saepe constat Deo operante claruisse uirtutibus. Haec et de corporis eius incorruptione breuiter attigimus, ut, quanta esset uiri sublimitas, legentibus notius existeret. Quae cuncta in libello eius sufficientius, sed et de aliis conuulsiuonibus ipsius, quisque legerit, inueniet.

How Fursa built a monastery among the East Angles, and of his visions and sanctity, to which, his flesh remaining uncorrupted after death bore testimony. [*Circ. 633 a.d.*]

Whilst Sigbert still governed the kingdom, there came out of Ireland a holy man called Fursa, renowned both for his words and actions, and remarkable for singular virtues, being desirous to live as a stranger and pilgrim for the Lord's sake, wherever an opportunity should offer. On coming into the province of the East Angles, he was honourably received by the aforesaid king, and performing his wonted task of preaching the Gospel, by the example of his virtue and the influence of his words, converted many unbelievers to Christ, and confirmed in the faith and love of Christ those that already believed.

Here he fell into some infirmity of body, and was thought worthy to see a vision of angels; in which he was admonished diligently to persevere in the ministry of the Word which he had undertaken, and indefatigably to apply himself to his usual watching and prayers; inasmuch as his end was certain, but the hour thereof uncertain, according to the saying of our Lord, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour." Being confirmed by this vision, he set himself with all speed to build a monastery on the ground which had been given him by King Sigbert, and to establish a rule of life therein. This monastery was pleasantly situated in the woods, near the sea; it was built within the area of a fort, which in the English language is called Cnobheresburg, that is, Cnobhere's Town; afterwards, Anna, king of that province, and certain of the nobles, embellished it with more stately buildings and with gifts.

This man was of noble Scottish blood, but much more noble in mind than in birth. From his boyish years, he had earnestly applied himself to reading sacred books and observing monastic discipline, and, as is most fitting for holy men, he carefully practised all that he learned to be right.

Now, in course of time he himself built a monastery, wherein he might with more freedom devote himself to his heavenly studies. There, falling sick, as the book concerning his life clearly informs us, he fell into a trance, and quitting his body from the evening till cockcrow, he was accounted worthy to behold the sight of the choirs of angels, and to hear their glad songs of praise. He was wont to declare, that among other things he distinctly heard this refrain: "The saints shall go from strength to strength." And again, "The God of gods shall be seen in Sion." Being restored to his body, and again taken from it three days after, he not only saw the greater joys of the blessed, but also fierce conflicts of evil spirits, who by frequent accusations wickedly endeavoured to obstruct his journey to heaven; but the angels protected him,

and all their endeavours were in vain. Concerning all these matters, if any one desires to be more fully informed, to wit, with what subtlety of deceit the devils recounted both his actions and idle words, and even his thoughts, as if they had been written down in a book; and what joyous or grievous tidings he learned from the holy angels and just men who appeared to him among the angels; let him read the little book of his life which I have mentioned, and I doubt not that he will thereby reap much spiritual profit.

But there is one thing among the rest, which we have thought it may be beneficial to many to insert in this history. When he had been taken up on high, he was bidden by the angels that conducted him to look back upon the world. Upon which, casting his eyes downward, he saw, as it were, a dark valley in the depths underneath him. He also saw four fires in the air, not far distant from each other. Then asking the angels, what fires those were, he was told, they were the fires which would kindle and consume the world. One of them was of falsehood, when we do not fulfil that which we promised in Baptism, to renounce the Devil and all his works. The next was of covetousness, when we prefer the riches of the world to the love of heavenly things. The third was of discord, when we do not fear to offend our neighbour even in needless things. The fourth was of ruthlessness when we think it a light thing to rob and to defraud the weak. These fires, increasing by degrees, extended so as to meet one another, and united in one immense flame. When it drew near, fearing for himself, he said to the angel, "Lord, behold the fire draws near to me." The angel answered, "That which you did not kindle will not burn you; for though this appears to be a terrible and great pyre, yet it tries every man according to the merits of his works; for every man's concupiscence shall burn in this fire; for as a man burns in the body through unlawful pleasure, so, when set free from the body, he shall burn by the punishment which he has deserved."

Then he saw one of the three angels, who had been his guides throughout both visions, go before and divide the flaming fires, whilst the other two, flying about on both sides, defended him from the danger of the fire. He also saw devils flying through the fire, raising the flames of war against the just. Then followed accusations of the envious spirits against himself, the defence of the good spirits, and a fuller vision of the heavenly hosts; as also of holy men of his own nation, who, as he had learnt, had worthily held the office of priesthood in old times, and who were known to fame; from whom he heard many things very salutary to himself, and to all others that would listen to them. When they had ended their discourse, and returned to Heaven with the angelic spirits, there remained with the blessed Fursa, the three angels of whom we have spoken before, and who were to bring him back to the body. And when they approached the aforesaid great fire, the angel divided the flame, as he had done before; but when the man of God came to the passage so opened amidst the flames, the unclean spirits, laying hold of one of those

whom they were burning in the fire, cast him against him, and, touching his shoulder and jaw, scorched them. He knew the man, and called to mind that he had received his garment when he died. The holy angel, immediately laying hold of the man, threw him back into the fire, and the malignant enemy said, "Do not reject him whom you before received; for as you received the goods of the sinner, so you ought to share in his punishment." But the angel withstood him, saying, "He did not receive them through avarice, but in order to save his soul." The fire ceased, and the angel, turning to him, said, "That which you kindled burned you; for if you had not received the money of this man that died in his sins, his punishment would not burn you." And he went on to speak with wholesome counsel of what ought to be done for the salvation of such as repented in the hour of death.

Being afterwards restored to the body, throughout the whole course of his life he bore the mark of the fire which he had felt in the spirit, visible to all men on his shoulder and jaw; and the flesh openly showed, in a wonderful manner, what the spirit had suffered in secret. He always took care, as he had done before, to teach all men the practice of virtue, as well by his example, as by preaching. But as for the story of his visions, he would only relate them to those who, from desire of repentance, questioned him about them. An aged brother of our monastery is still living, who is wont to relate that a very truthful and religious man told him, that he had seen Fursa himself in the province of the East Angles, and heard those visions from his lips; adding, that though it was in severe winter weather and a hard frost, and the man was sitting in a thin garment when he told the story, yet he sweated as if it had been in the heat of mid-summer, by reason of the great terror or joy of which he spoke.

To return to what we were saying before, when, after preaching the Word of God many years in Scotland, he could not well endure the disturbance of the crowds that resorted to him, leaving all that he looked upon as his own, he departed from his native island, and came with a few brothers through the Britons into the province of the English, and preaching the Word there, as has been said, built a famous monastery. When this was duly carried out, he became desirous to rid himself of all business of this world, and even of the monastery itself, and forthwith left the care of it and of its souls, to his brother Fullan, and the priests Gobban and Dicull, and being himself free from all worldly affairs, resolved to end his life as a hermit. He had another brother called Ultan, who, after a long monastic probation, had also adopted the life of an anchorite. So, seeking him out alone, he lived a whole year with him in self-denial and prayer, and laboured daily with his hands.

Afterwards seeing the province thrown into confusion by the irruptions of the pagans, and foreseeing that the monasteries would also be in danger, he left all things in order, and sailed over into Gaul, and being there honourably entertained by Clovis, king of the Franks, or by the patrician Ercinwald, he

built a monastery in the place called Latineacum, and falling sick not long after, departed this life. The same Ercinwald, the patrician, took his body, and kept it in the porch of a church he was building in his town of Perrona, till the church itself should be dedicated. This happened twenty-seven days after, and the body being taken from the porch, to be re-buried near the altar, was found as whole as if he had died that very hour. And again, four years after, when a more beautiful shrine had been built to receive his body to the east of the altar, it was still found without taint of corruption, and was translated thither with due honour; where it is well known that his merits, through the divine operation, have been declared by many miracles. We have briefly touched upon these matters as well as the incorruption of his body, that the lofty nature of the man may be better known to our readers. All which, as also concerning the comrades of his warfare, whosoever will read it, will find more fully described in the book of his life.

CHAP. 20

Interea, defuncto Felice Orientalium Anglorum episcopo post X et VII annos accepti episcopatus, Honorius loco eius ordinavit Thomam diaconum eius de prouincia Gyruiorum; et hoc post quinque annos sui episcopatus de hac uita subtracto, Berctgilsum, cognomine Bonifatium, de prouincia Cantuariorum, loco eius substituit. Et ipse quoque Honorius, postquam metas sui cursus inpleuit, ex hac luce migravit anno ab incarnatione Domini DCLIII, pridie Kalendarum Octobrium; et cessante episcopatu per annum et sex menses, electus est archiepiscopus cathedrae Doruuernensis sextus Deusdedit de gente Occidentalium Saxonum; quem ordinaturus uenit illuc Ithamar, antistes ecclesiae Hrofensis. Ordinatus est autem die VIImo Kalendarum Aprilium, et rexit ecclesiam annos VIII, menses III et duos dies; et ipse, defuncto Ithamar, consecrauit pro eo Damianum, qui de genere Australium Saxonum erat oriundus.

Chap. XX.

How, when Honorius died, Deusdedit became Archbishop of Canterbury; and of those who were at that time bishops of the East Angles, and of the church of Rochester. [653 a.d.]

In the meantime, Felix, bishop of the East Angles, dying, when he had held that see seventeen years, Honorius ordained Thomas his deacon, of the province of the Gyrwas, in his place; and he being taken from this life when he had been bishop five years, Bertgils, surnamed Boniface, of the province of Kent, was appointed in his stead. Honorius himself also, having run his course, departed this life in the year of our Lord 653, on the 30th of September; and when the see had been vacant a year and six months, Deusdedit of the nation of the West Saxons, was chosen the sixth Archbishop of Canterbury. To ordain him, Ithamar, bishop of Rochester, came thither. His ordination was on the 26th of March, and he ruled the church nine years, four months, and two days; and when Ithamar died, he consecrated in his place Damian, who was of the race of the South Saxons.

CHAP. 21

HIS temporibus Middilangli, id est Mediterranei Angli, sub principe Peada filio Pendan regis fidem et sacramenta ueritatis perceperunt, Qui cum esset iuuenis optimus, ac regis nomine ac persona dignissimus, praelatus est a patre regno gentis illius;

uenitque ad regem Nordanhymbrorum Osuii, postulans filiam eius Alchfledam sibi coniugem dari. Neque aliter, quod petebat, inpetrare potuit, nisi fidem Christi ac baptismum cum gente, cui praeerat, acciperet. At ille audita praedicatione ueritatis, et promissione regni caelestis, speque resurrectionis ac futurae immortalitatis, libenter se Christianum fieri uelle confessus est, etiamsi uirginem non acciperet; persuasus maxime ad percipiendam fidem a filio regis Osuii, nomine Alchfrido, qui erat cognatus et amicus eius, habens sororem ipsius coniugem, uocabulo Cyniburgam, filiam Pendan regis. Baptizatus est ergo a Finano episcopo cum omnibus, qui secum uenerant, comitibus ac militibus, eorumque famulis uniuersis in uico regis inlustri, qui uocatur Ad Murum. Et acceptis IIII presbyteris, qui ad docendam baptizandamque gentem illius et eruditione et uita uidebantur idonei, multo cum gaudio reuersus est. Erant autem presbyteri, Ceddd, et Adda, et Betti, et Diuma, quorum ultimus natione Scottus, ceteri fuere de Anglis. Adda autem erat frater Uttan presbyteri inlustri, et abbatis monasterii, quod uocatur Ad Caprae Caput, cuius supra meminimus. Uenientes ergo in prouinciam memorati sacerdotes cum principe, praedicabant uerbum, et libenter auditi sunt, multique cotidie, et nobilium, et infirmorum, abrenuntiata sordiditate idolatriae, fidei sunt fonte abluti.

Nec prohibuit Penda rex, quin etiam in sua, hoc est Merciorum, natione uerbum, siqui uellent audire, praedicaretur. Quin potius odio habebat, et dispiciebat eos, quos fide Christi inbutos opera fidei non habere deprehendit, dicens contemnendos esse eos et miseros, qui Deo suo, in quem crederent, obediunt contemnerent.

Coepta sunt haec biennio ante mortem Pendan regis. Ipso autem occiso, cum Osuii rex Christianus regnum eius acciperet, ut in sequentibus dicemus, factus est Diuma unus ex praefatis IIII sacerdotibus episcopus Mediterraneorum Anglorum simul et Merciorum, ordinatus a Finano episcopo. Paucitas enim sacerdotum cogebat unum antistitem duobus populis praefici. Qui cum paucis sub tempore non paucam Domino plebem adquisisset, defunctus est apud Mediterraneos Anglos in regione, quae uocatur Infeppingum. Suscepitque pro illo episcopatum Ceollach, et ipse de natione Scottorum, qui non multo post, relicto episcopatu, reuersus est ad insulam Hii, ubi plurimorum caput et arcem Scotti habuere coenobiorum; succedente illi in episcopatum Trumheri, uiro religioso et monachica uita instituto, natione quidem Anglorum, sed a Scottis ordinato episcopo.

Quod temporibus Uulfheri regis, de quo in sequentibus dicemus, factum

Chap. XXI.

How the province of the Midland Angles became Christian under King Peda. [653 a.d.]

At this time, the Middle Angles, that is, the Angles of the Midland country, under their Prince Peda, the son of King Penda, received the faith and mysteries of the truth. Being an excellent youth, and most worthy of the name and office of a king, he was by his father elevated to the throne of that nation, and came to Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, requesting to have his daughter Alchfled given him to wife; but he could not obtain his desire unless he would receive the faith of Christ, and be baptized, with the nation which he governed. When he heard the preaching of the truth, the promise of the heavenly kingdom, and the hope of resurrection and future immortality, he declared that he would willingly become a Christian, even though he should not obtain the maiden; being chiefly prevailed on to receive the faith by King Oswy's son Alchfrid, who was his brother-in-law and friend, for he had married his sister Cyneburg, the daughter of King Penda.

Accordingly he was baptized by Bishop Finan, with all his nobles and thegns, and their servants, that came along with him, at a noted township, belonging to the king, called At the Wall. And having received four priests, who by reason of their learning and good life were deemed proper to instruct and baptize his nation, he returned home with much joy. These priests were Cedd and Adda, and Betti and Diuma; the last of whom was by nation a Scot, the others English. Adda was brother to Utta, whom we have mentioned before, a renowned priest, and abbot of the monastery which is called At the Goat's Head. The aforesaid priests, arriving in the province with the prince, preached the Word, and were heard willingly; and many, as well of the nobility as the common sort, renouncing the abominations of idolatry, were daily washed in the fountain of the faith.

Nor did King Penda forbid the preaching of the Word even among his people, the Mercians, if any were willing to hear it; but, on the contrary, he hated and despised those whom he perceived to be without the works of faith, when they had once received the faith of Christ, saying, that they were contemptible and wretched who scorned to obey their God, in whom they believed. These things were set on foot two years before the death of King Penda.

But when he was slain, and the most Christian king, Oswy, succeeded him in the throne, as we shall hereafter relate, Diuma, one of the aforesaid four priests, was made bishop of the Midland Angles, as also of the Mercians, being ordained by Bishop Finan; for the scarcity of priests made it necessary that one prelate should be set over two nations. Having in a short time gained

many people to the Lord, he died among the Midland Angles, in the country called Infeppingum; and Ceollach, also of the Scottish nation, succeeded him in the bishopric. But he, not long after, left his bishopric, and returned to the island of Hii, which, among the Scots, was the chief and head of many monasteries. His successor in the bishopric was Trumhere, a godly man, and trained in the monastic life, an Englishman, but ordained bishop by the Scots. This happened in the days of King Wulfhere, of whom we shall speak hereafter.

CHAP. 22

Eo tempore etiam Orientales Saxones fidem, quam olim, expulso Mellito antistite, abiecerant, instantia regis Osuii receperunt.

Erat enim rex eiusdem gentis Sigberct, qui post Sigberctum cognomento Paruum regnauit, amicus eiusdem Osuii regis, qui, cum frequenter ad eum in prouinciam Nordanhymbrorum ueniret, solebat eum hortari ad intellegendum deos esse non posse, qui hominum manibus facti essent; dei creandi materiam lignum uel lapidem esse non posse, quorum recisurae uel igni absumerentur, uel in uasa quaelibet humani usus formarentur, uel certe dispectui habita foras proicerentur, et pedibus conculcata in terram uerterentur. Deum potius intellegendum maiestate inconprehensibilem, humanis oculis inuisibilem, omnipotentem, aeternum, qui caelum et terram et humanum genus creasset, regeret, et iudicaturus esset orbem in aequitate;

cuius sedes aeterna non in uili et caduco metallo, sed in caelis esset credenda; meritoque intellegendum, quia omnes, qui uoluntatem eius, a quo creati sunt, discerent et facerent, aeterna ab illo praemia essent percepturi. Haec et huiusmodi multa cum rex Osuii regi Sigbercto amicali et quasi fraterno consilio saepe inculcaret, tandem iuuante amicorum consensu credit, et, facto cum suis consilio, cum exhortatione, fauentibus cunctis et adnuentibus fidei, baptizatus est cum eis a Finano episcopo in uilla regia, cuius supra meminimus, quae cognominatur Ad Murum. Est enim iuxta murum, quo olim Romani Britanniam insulam praecinxere, XII milibus passuum a mari orientali secreta.

Igitur rex Sigberct aeterni regni iam ciuis effectus, temporalis sui regni sedem repetiit, postulans ab Osuii rege, ut aliquos sibi doctores daret, qui gentem suam ad fidem Christi conuerterent, ac fonte salutari abluerent. At ille mittens ad prouinciam Mediterraneorum Anglorum clamauit ad se uirum Dei Cedd, et dato illi socio altero quodam presbytero, misit praedicare uerbum genti Orientalium Saxonum. Ubi cum omnia perambulantes multam Domino ecclesiam congregassent, contigit tempore quodam eundem Cedd redire domum, ac peruenire ad ecclesiam Lindisfaronensem propter conloquium Finani episcopi. Qui ubi prosperatum ei opus euangelii conperit, fecit eum episcopum in gentem Orientalium Saxonum, uocatis ad se in ministerium ordinationis aliis duobus episcopis. Qui accepto gradu episcopatus rediit ad prouinciam, et maiore auctoritate coeptum opus explens, fecit per loca ecclesias, presbyteros et diaconos ordinauit, qui se in uerbo fidei et ministerio baptizandi adiuuarent, maxime in ciuitate, quae lingua Saxonum Ythancaestir appellatur, sed et in illa, quae Tilaburg cognominatur; quorum prior locus est in ripa Penta amnis, secundus in ripa Tamensis. In quibus, collecto examine famulorum Christi, disciplinam uitae regularis, in quantum rudes adhuc capere poterant, custodiri docuit.

Cumque tempore non paucō in praefata prouincia, gaudente rege, congaudente uniuerso populo, uitae caelestis institutio cotidianum sumeret augmentum, contigit ipsum regem instigante omnium bonorum inimico, propinquorum suorum manu interfici. Erant autem duo germani fratres, qui hoc facinus patrarunt; qui cum interrogarentur, quare hoc facerent, nil aliud respondere potuerunt, nisi ob hoc se iratos fuisse et inimicos regi, quod ille nimium suis parcere soleret inimicis, et factas ab eis iniurias mox obsecrantibus placida mente dimitteret. Talis erat culpa regis, pro qua occideretur, quod euangelica praecepta deuoto corde seruaret. In qua tamen eius morte innoxia, iuxta praedictum uiri Dei, uera est eius culpa punita. Habuerat enim unus ex his, qui eum occiderunt, comitibus inlicitum coniugium; quod cum episcopus prohibere et corrigere non posset, excommunicauit eum atque omnibus, qui se audire uellent, praecepit, ne domum eius intrarent, neque de cibis illius acciperent. Contempsit autem rex praeceptum, et rogatus a comite, intrauit epulaturus domum eius. Qui cum abisset, obuiauit ei antistes. At rex intuens eum, mox tremefactus desiluit equo, ceciditque ante pedes eius, ueniam reatus postulans. Nam et episcopus pariter desiluit; sederat enim et ipse in equo. Iratus autem tetigit regem iacentem uirga, quam tenebat manu, et pontificali auctoritate protestatus: ‘Dico tibi,’

inquit, ‘quia noluisti te continere a domu perditionis et damnationis illius, tu in ipsa domu mori habes.’ Sed credendum est, quia talis mors uiri religiosi non solum talem culpam diluerit, sed etiam meritum eius auxerit; quia nimirum ob causam pietatis, quia propter obseruantiam mandatorum Christi contigit.

Successit autem Sigbercto in regnum Suidhelm, filius Sexbaldi, qui baptizatus est ab ipso Cedde in prouincia Orientalium Anglorum, in uico regio, qui dicitur Rendlasham, id est mansio Rendili;

suscepitque eum ascendentem de fonto sancto Aediluald rex ipsius gentis Orientalium Anglorum, frater Anna regis eorundem.

Chap. XXII.

How under King Sigbert, through the preaching of Cedd, the East Saxons again received the faith, which they had before cast off. [653 a.d.]

At that time, also, the East Saxons, at the instance of King Oswy, again received the faith, which they had formerly cast off when they expelled Mellitus, their bishop. For Sigbert, who reigned next to Sigbert surnamed The Little, was then king of that nation, and a friend to King Oswy, who, when Sigbert came to the province of the Northumbrians to visit him, as he often did, used to endeavour to convince him that those could not be gods that had been made by the hands of men; that a stock or a stone could not be proper matter to form a god, the residue whereof was either burned in the fire, or framed into any vessels for the use of men, or else was cast out as refuse,

trampled on and turned into dust. That God is rather to be understood as incomprehensible in majesty and invisible to human eyes, almighty, eternal, the Creator of heaven and earth and of mankind; Who governs and will judge the world in righteousness, Whose eternal abode must be believed to be in Heaven, and not in base and perishable metal; and that it ought in reason to be concluded, that all those who learn and do the will of Him by Whom they were created, will receive from Him eternal rewards. King Oswy having often, with friendly counsel, like a brother, said this and much more to the like effect to King Sigbert, at length, aided by the consent of his friends, he believed, and after he had consulted with those about him, and exhorted them, when they all agreed and assented to the faith, he was baptized with them by Bishop Finan, in the king's township above spoken of, which is called At the Wall, because it is close by the wall which the Romans formerly drew across the island of Britain, at the distance of twelve miles from the eastern sea.

King Sigbert, having now become a citizen of the eternal kingdom, returned to the seat of his temporal kingdom, requesting of King Oswy that he would give him some teachers, to convert his nation to the faith of Christ, and cleanse them in the fountain of salvation. Wherefore Oswy, sending into the province of the Midland Angles, summoned the man of God, Cedd, and, giving him another priest for his companion, sent them to preach the Word to the East Saxons. When these two, travelling to all parts of that country, had gathered a numerous Church to the Lord, it happened once that Cedd returned home, and came to the church of Lindisfarne to confer with Bishop Finan; who, finding that the work of the Gospel had prospered in his hands, made him bishop of the nation of the East Saxons, calling to him two other bishops to assist at the ordination. Cedd, having received the episcopal dignity, returned to his province, and pursuing the work he had begun with more ample authority, built churches in divers places, and ordained priests and deacons to assist him in the Word of faith, and the ministry of Baptism, especially in the city which, in the language of the Saxons, is called Ythancaestir, as also in that which is named Tilaburg. The first of these places is on the bank of the Pant, the other on the bank of the Thames. In these, gathering a flock of Christ's servants, he taught them to observe the discipline of a rule of life, as far as those rude people were then capable of receiving it.

Whilst the teaching of the everlasting life was thus, for no small time, making daily increase in that province to the joy of the king and of all the people, it happened that the king, at the instigation of the enemy of all good men, was murdered by his own kindred. They were two brothers who did this wicked deed; and being asked what had moved them to it, they had nothing else to answer, but that they had been incensed against the king, and hated him, because he was too apt to spare his enemies, and calmly forgave the wrongs they had done him, upon their entreaty. Such was the crime for which the king was killed, because he observed the precepts of the Gospel with a

devout heart; but in this innocent death his real offence was also punished, according to the prediction of the man of God. For one of those nobles that murdered him was unlawfully married, and when the bishop was not able to prevent or correct the sin, he excommunicated him, and commanded all that would give ear to him not to enter this man's house, nor to eat of his meat. But the king made light of this command, and being invited by the noble, went to a banquet at his house. As he was going thence, the bishop met him. The king, beholding him, immediately dismounted from his horse, trembling, and fell down at his feet, begging pardon for his offence; for the bishop, who was likewise on horseback, had also alighted. Being much incensed, he touched the prostrate king with the rod he held in his hand, and spoke thus with the authority of his office: "I tell thee, forasmuch as thou wouldest not refrain from the house of that sinful and condemned man, thou shalt die in that very house." Yet it is to be believed, that such a death of a religious man not only blotted out his offence, but even added to his merit; because it happened on account of his piety and his observance of the commands of Christ.

Sigbert was succeeded in the kingdom by Suidhelm, the son of Sexbald, who was baptized by the same Cedd, in the province of the East Angles, in the royal township, called Rendlaesham, that is, Rendil's Dwelling; and Ethelwald, king of the East Angles, brother to Anna, king of the same people, received him as he came forth from the holy font.

CHAP. 23

Solebat autem idem uir Domini, cum apud Orientales Saxones episcopatus officio fungeretur, saepius etiam suam, id est Nordanhymbrorum, prouinciam exhortandi gratia reuisere: quem cum Oidiluald, filius Osualdi regis, qui in Derorum partibus regnum habebat, uirum sanctum et sapientem, probumque moribus uideret, postulauit eum possessionem terrae aliquam a se ad construendum monasterium accipere, in quo ipse rex et frequentius ad deprecandum Dominum uerbumque audiendum aduenire, et defunctus sepeliri deberet.

Nam et se ipsum fideliter credidit multum iuuari eorum orationibus cotidianis, qui illo in loco Domino seruirent. Habuerat autem idem rex secum fratrem germanum eiusdem episcopi, uocabulo Caelin, uirum aequae Deo deuotum, qui ipsi ac familiae ipsius uerbum et sacramenta fidei, erat enim presbyter, ministrare solebat, per cuius notitiam maxime ad diligendum noscendumque episcopum peruenit. Fauens ergo uotis regis antistes elegit sibi locum monasterii construendi in montibus arduis ac remotis, in quibus latronum magis latibula, ac lustra ferarum, quam habitacula fuisse uidebantur hominum; ut, iuxta prophetiam Isaiae, ‘in cubilibus, in quibus prius dracones habitabant, oriretur uiror calami et iunci,’ id est fructus bonorum operum ibi nascerentur, ubi prius uel bestiae commorari, uel homines bestialiter uiuere consueuerant.

Studens autem uir Domini acceptum monasterii locum primo precibus ac ieiuniis a pristina flagitiorum sorde purgare, et sic in eo monasterii fundamenta iacere, postulauit a rege, ut sibi totum XLmae tempus, quod instabat, facultatem ac licentiam ibidem orationis causa demorandi concederet. Quibus diebus cunctis, excepta dominica, ieiunium ad uesperam usque iuxta morem protelans, ne tunc quidem nisi panis permodicum, et unum ouum gallinaceum cum paruo lacte aqua mixto percipiebat. Dicebat enim hanc esse consuetudinem eorum, a quibus normam disciplinae regularis didicerat, ut accepta nuper loca ad faciendum monasterium uel ecclesiam, prius orationibus ac ieiuniis Domino consecrent. Cumque X dies XLmae restarent, uenit qui clamaret eum ad regem. At ille, ne opus religiosum negotiorum regalium causa intermitteretur, petiit presbyterum suum Cynibillum, qui etiam frater germanus erat ipsius, pia coepta complere. Cui cum ille libenter adquiesceret, expleto studio ieiuniorum et orationis, fecit ibi monasterium, quod nunc Laestingaeu uocatur, et religiosis moribus iuxta ritus Lindisfarnensium, ubi educatus erat, instituit.

Qui cum annis multis et in praefata prouincia episcopatum administraret, et huius quoque monasterii statutis propositis curam gereret, casu contigit, ut ad ipsum monasterium tempore mortalitatis adueniens, tactus ibidem infirmitate corporis obiret. Qui primo quidem foris sepultus est; tempore autem

procedente, in eodem monasterio ecclesia est in honorem beatae Dei genetricis de lapide facta, et in illa corpus ipsius ad dexteram altaris reconditum.

Dedit autem episcopus regendum post se monasterium fratri suo Ceadda, qui postea episcopus factus est, ut in sequentibus dicemus. IIII siquidem hi, quos diximus, germani fratres, Cedd, et Cynibill, et Caelin, et Ceadda, quod raro inuenitur, omnes sacerdotes Domini fuere praeclari, et duo ex eis etiam summi sacerdotii gradu functi sunt. Cum ergo episcopum defunctum ac sepultum in prouincia Nordanhymbrorum audirent fratres, qui in monasterio eius erant in prouincia Orientalium Saxonum, uenerunt illo de suo monasterio homines circiter XXX, cupientes ad corpus sui patris, aut uiuere, si sic Deo placeret, aut morientes ibi sepeliri. Qui libenter a suis fratribus et commilitonibus suscepti, omnes ibidem superueniente praefatae pestilentiae clade defuncti sunt, excepto uno puerulo, quem orationibus patris sui a morte constat esse seruatum. Nam cum multo post haec tempore uiueret, et scripturis legendis operam daret, tandem didicit se aqua baptismatis non esse regeneratum, et mox fonte lauacri salutaris ablutus, etiam postmodum ad ordinem presbyterii promotus est, multisque in ecclesia utilis fuit; de quo dubitandum non crediderim, quin intercessionibus, ut dixi, sui patris, ad cuius corpus dilectionis ipsius gratia uenerat, sit ab articulo mortis retentus, ut et ipse sic mortem euaderet aeternam, et aliis quoque fratribus ministerium uitae ac salutis docendo exhiberet.

Chap. XXIII.

How Bishop Cedd, having a place for building a monastery given him by King Ethelwald, consecrated it to the Lord with prayer and fasting; and concerning his death. [659-664 a.d.]

The same man of God, whilst he was bishop among the East Saxons, was also wont oftentimes to visit his own province, Northumbria, for the purpose of exhortation. Oidilwald, the son of King Oswald, who reigned among the Deiri, finding him a holy, wise, and good man, desired him to accept some land whereon to build a monastery, to which the king himself might frequently resort, to pray to the Lord and hear the Word, and where he might be buried when he died; for he believed faithfully that he should receive much benefit from the daily prayers of those who were to serve the Lord in that place. The king had before with him a brother of the same bishop, called Caelin, a man no less devoted to God, who, being a priest, was wont to administer to him and his house the Word and the Sacraments of the faith; by whose means he chiefly came to know and love the bishop. So then, complying with the king's desires, the Bishop chose himself a place whereon to build a monastery among steep and distant mountains, which looked more like lurking-places for robbers and dens of wild beasts, than dwellings of men;

to the end that, according to the prophecy of Isaiah, "In the habitation of dragons, where each lay, might be grass with reeds and rushes;" that is, that the fruits of good works should spring up, where before beasts were wont to dwell, or men to live after the manner of beasts.

But the man of God, desiring first to cleanse the place which he had received for the monastery from stain of former crimes, by prayer and fasting, and so to lay the foundations there, requested of the king that he would give him opportunity and leave to abide there for prayer all the time of Lent, which was at hand. All which days, except Sundays, he prolonged his fast till the evening, according to custom, and then took no other sustenance than a small piece of bread, one hen's egg, and a little milk and water. This, he said, was the custom of those of whom he had learned the rule of regular discipline, first to consecrate to the Lord, by prayer and fasting, the places which they had newly received for building a monastery or a church. When there were ten days of Lent still remaining, there came a messenger to call him to the king; and he, that the holy work might not be intermitted, on account of the king's affairs, entreated his priest, Cynibill, who was also his own brother, to complete his pious undertaking. Cynibill readily consented, and when the duty of fasting and prayer was over, he there built the monastery, which is now called Laestingaeu, and established therein religious customs according to the use of Lindisfarne, where he had been trained.

When Cedd had for many years held the office of bishop in the aforesaid province, and also taken charge of this monastery, over which he placed provosts, it happened that he came thither at a time when there was plague, and fell sick and died. He was first buried without the walls; but in the process of time a church was built of stone in the monastery, in honour of the Blessed Mother of God, and his body was laid in it, on the right side of the altar.

The bishop left the monastery to be governed after him by his brother Ceadda, who was afterwards made bishop, as shall be told hereafter. For, as it rarely happens, the four brothers we have mentioned, Cedd and Cynibill, and Caelin and Ceadda, were all celebrated priests of the Lord, and two of them also came to be bishops. When the brethren who were in his monastery, in the province of the East Saxons, heard that the bishop was dead and buried in the province of the Northumbrians, about thirty men of that monastery came thither, being desirous either to live near the body of their father, if it should please God, or to die and be buried there. Being gladly received by their brethren and fellow soldiers in Christ, all of them died there struck down by the aforesaid pestilence, except one little boy, who is known to have been saved from death by the prayers of his spiritual father. For being alive long after, and giving himself to the reading of Scripture, he was told that he had not been regenerated by the water of Baptism, and being then cleansed in the laver of salvation, he was afterwards promoted to the order of priesthood, and

was of service to many in the church. I do not doubt that he was delivered at the point of death, as I have said, by the intercession of his father, to whose body he had come for love of him, that so he might himself avoid eternal death, and by teaching, offer the ministry of life and salvation to others of the brethren.

CHAP. 24

His temporibus rex Osuii, cum acerbas atque intolerabiles pateretur inruptiones saepe dicti regis Merciorum, qui fratrem eius occiderat, ad ultimum necessitate cogente promisit se ei innumera et maiora, quam credi potest, ornamenta regia uel donaria in pretium pacis largiturum, dummodo ille domum rediret, et prouincias regni eius usque ad internicionem uastare desineret. Cumque rex perfidus nullatenus precibus illius assensum praeberet, qui totam eius gentem a paruo usque ad magnum delere atque exterminare decreuerat, respexit ille ad diuinae auxilium pietatis, quo ab impietate barbarica posset eripi; uotoque se obligans: ‘Si paganus,’

inquit, ‘nescit accipere nostra donaria, offeramus ei, qui nouit, Domino Deo nostro.’ Uouit ergo, quia, si uictor existeret, filiam suam Domino sacra uirginitate dicendam offerret, simul et XII possessiones praediorum ad construenda monasteria donaret; et sic cum paucissimo exercitu se certamini dedit. Denique fertur, quia tricies maiorem pagani habuerint exercitum; siquidem ipsi XXX legiones ducibus nobilissimis instructas in bello habuere, quibus Osuii rex cum Alchfrido filio, perparuum, ut dixi, habens exercitum, sed Christo duce confisus, occurrit. Nam alius filius eius Ecgfrid eo tempore in prouincia Merciorum apud reginam Cynuise obses tenebatur; filius autem Osualdi regis Oidiluald, qui eis auxilio esse debuerat, in parte erat aduersariorum, eisdemque contra patriam et patrum suum pugnaturis ductor exstiterat, quamuis ipso tempore pugnandi sese pugnae subtraxerat, euentumque discriminis tuto in loco exspectabat. Inito ergo certamine fugati sunt et caesi pagani, duces regii XXX, qui ad auxilium uenerant, pene omnes interfecti; in quibus Aedilheri, frater Anna regis Orientalium Anglorum, qui post eum regnauit, auctor ipse belli, perditis militibus siue auxiliis interemtus est. Et quia prope fluuium Uinuad pugnatum est, qui tunc prae inundantia pluuiarum late alueum suum immo omnes ripas suas transierat, contigit, ut multo plures aqua fugientes, quam bellantes perderet ensis.

Tum rex Osuii, iuxta quod Domino uouerat, pro conlata sibi uictoria gratias Deo referens dedit filiam suam Aelfledam, quae uixdum unius anni aetatem inpleuerat, perpetua ei uirginitate consecrandam; donatis insuper XII possessiunculis terrarum, in quibus ablato studio militiae terrestres, ad exercendam militiam caelestem, supplicandumque pro pace gentis eius aeterna, deuotioni sedulae monachorum locus facultasque suppeteret. E quibus uidelicet possessiunculis sex in prouincia Derorum, sex in Berniciorum dedit.

Singulae uero possessiones X erant familiarum, id est simul omnes CXX. Intrauit autem praefata regis Osuii filia Deo dedicanda monasterium, quod nuncupatur Heruteu, id est insula cerui, cui tunc Hild abbatissa praefuit. Quae post biennium comparata possessione X familiarum in loco, qui dicitur

StreanĀshalch, ibi monasterium construxit;

in quo memorata regis filia primo discipula uitae regularis, deinde etiam magistra extitit, donec completo undeLX annorum numero, ad complexum et nuptias sponsi caelestis uirgo beata intraret. In quo monasterio et ipsa, et pater eius Osuiu, et mater eius Aeanfled, et pater matris eius Aeduini, et multi alii nobiles in ecclesia sancti apostoli Petri sepulti sunt. Hoc autem bellum rex Osuiu in regione Loidis tertio decimo regni sui anno, XVIIa die Kalendarum Decembrium cum magna utriusque populi utilitate confecit. Nam et suam gentem ab hostili paganorum depopulatione liberauit, et ipsam gentem Merciorum finitimarumque prouinciarum, desecto capite perfido, ad fidei Christianae gratiam conuertit.

Primus autem in prouincia Merciorum, simul et Lindisfarorum ac Mediterraneorum Anglorum, factus est episcopus Diuma, ut supra diximus, qui apud Mediterraneos Anglos defunctus ac sepultus est;

secundus Cellach, qui relicto episcopatus officio uiuens ad Scottiam rediit, uterque de genere Scottorum; tertius Trumheri, de natione quidem Anglorum, sed edoctus et ordinatus a Scottis, qui erat abbas in monasterio, quod dicitur Ingetlingum. Ipse est locus, ubi occisus est rex Osuini, ut supra meminimus. Nam regina Aeanfled propinqua illius, ob castigationem necis eius iniustae, postulauit a rege Osuio, ut donaret ibi locum monasterio construendo praefato Dei famulo Trumhera, quia propinquus et ipse erat regis occisi; in quo uidelicet monasterio orationes assiduae pro utriusque regis, id est et occisi, et eius, qui occidere iussit, salute aeterna fierent.

Idem autem rex Osuiu tribus annis post occisionem Pandan regis, Merciorum genti necnon et ceteris australium prouinciarum populis praefuit; qui etiam gentem Pictorum maxima ex parte regno Anglorum subiecit.

Quo tempore donauit praefato Peada filio regis Pandan, eo quod esset cognatus suus, regnum Australium Merciorum, qui sunt, ut dicunt, familiarum quinque milium, discreti fluuio Treanta, ab Aquilonaribus Merciiis, quorum terra est familiarum VII milium. Sed idem Peada proximo uere multum nefarie peremptus est, proditione, ut dicunt, coniugis suae in ipso tempore festi paschalis.

Conpletis autem tribus annis post interfectionem Pandan regis, rebellarunt aduersus regem Osuiu duces gentis Merciorum, Immin, et Eaifa, et Eadberct, leuato in regem Uulfhere filio eiusdem Pandan adulescente, quem occultum seruauerant, et eiectis principibus regis non proprii, fines suos fortiter simul et libertatem receperunt;

sicque cum suo rege liberi, Christo uero regi pro sempiterno in caelis regno seruire gaudebant. Praefuit autem rex idem genti Merciorum annis X et VII, habuitque primum episcopum Trumheri, de quo supra diximus, secundum Iaruman, tertium Ceaddan, quartum Uynfridum. Omnes hi per ordinem sibimet succedentes sub rege Uulfhere, gentis Merciorum episcopatu sunt

Chap. XXIV.

How when King Penda was slain, the province of the Mercians received the faith of Christ, and Oswy gave possessions and territories to God, for building monasteries, as a thank offering for the victory obtained. [655 a.d.]

At this time, King Oswy was exposed to the cruel and intolerable invasions of Penda, king of the Mercians, whom we have so often mentioned, and who had slain his brother; at length, compelled by his necessity, he promised to give him countless gifts and royal marks of honour greater than can be believed, to purchase peace; provided that he would return home, and cease to waste and utterly destroy the provinces of his kingdom. The pagan king refused to grant his request, for he had resolved to blot out and extirpate all his nation, from the highest to the lowest; whereupon King Oswy had recourse to the protection of the Divine pity for deliverance from his barbarous and pitiless foe, and binding himself by a vow, said, "If the pagan will not accept our gifts, let us offer them to Him that will, the Lord our God." He then vowed, that if he should win the victory, he would dedicate his daughter to the Lord in holy virginity, and give twelve pieces of land whereon to build monasteries. After this he gave battle with a very small army: indeed, it is reported that the pagans had thirty times the number of men; for they had thirty legions, drawn up under most noted commanders. King Oswy and his son Alchfrid met them with a very small army, as has been said, but trusting in Christ as their Leader; his other son, Egfrid, was then kept as a hostage at the court of Queen Cynwise, in the province of the Mercians. King Oswald's son Oidilwald, who ought to have supported them, was on the enemy's side, and led them on to fight against his country and his uncle; though, during the battle, he withdrew, and awaited the event in a place of safety. The engagement began, the pagans were put to flight or killed, the thirty royal commanders, who had come to Penda's assistance, were almost all of them slain; among whom was Ethelhere, brother and successor to Anna, king of the East Angles. He had been the occasion of the war, and was now killed, having lost his army and auxiliaries. The battle was fought near the river Winwaed, which then, owing to the great rains, was in flood, and had overflowed its banks, so that many more were drowned in the flight than destroyed in battle by the sword.

Then King Oswy, according to the vow he had made to the Lord, returned thanks to God for the victory granted him, and gave his daughter Elfred, who was scarce a year old, to be consecrated to Him in perpetual virginity; bestowing also twelve small estates of land, wherein the practice of earthly warfare should cease, and place and means should be afforded to devout and zealous monks to wage spiritual warfare, and pray for the eternal peace of his nation. Of these estates six were in the province of the Deiri, and the other six

in that of the Bernicians. Each of the estates contained ten families, that is, a hundred and twenty in all. The aforesaid daughter of King Oswy, who was to be dedicated to God, entered the monastery called Heruteu, or, "The Island of the Hart," at that time ruled by the Abbess Hilda, who, two years after, having acquired an estate of ten families, at the place called Streanaeshalch, built a monastery there, in which the aforesaid king's daughter was first trained in the monastic life and afterwards became abbess; till, at the age of fifty-nine, the blessed virgin departed to be united to her Heavenly Bridegroom. In this monastery, she and her father, Oswy, her mother, Eanfled, her mother's father, Edwin, and many other noble persons, are buried in the church of the holy Apostle Peter. King Oswy concluded this war in the district of Loidis, in the thirteenth year of his reign, on the 15th of November, to the great benefit of both nations; for he delivered his own people from the hostile depredations of the pagans, and, having made an end of their heathen chief, converted the Mercians and the adjacent provinces to the grace of the Christian faith.

Diuma was made the first bishop of the Mercians, as also of Lindsey and the Midland Angles, as has been said above, and he died and was buried among the Midland Angles. The second was Ceollach, who, giving up his episcopal office before his death, returned into Scotland. Both these bishops belonged to the nation of the Scots. The third was Trumhere, an Englishman, but educated and ordained by the Scots. He was abbot of the monastery that is called Ingetlingum, and is the place where King Oswin was killed, as has been said above; for Queen Eanfled, his kinswoman, in expiation of his unjust death, begged of King Oswy that he would give Trumhere, the aforesaid servant of God, a place there to build a monastery, because he also was kinsman to the slaughtered king; in which monastery continual prayers should be offered up for the eternal welfare of the kings, both of him that was murdered, and of him that commanded the murder. The same King Oswy governed the Mercians, as also the people of the other southern provinces, three years after he had slain King Penda; and he likewise subdued the greater part of the Picts to the dominion of the English.

At this time he gave to the above-mentioned Peada, son to King Penda, because he was his kinsman, the kingdom of the Southern Mercians, consisting, as is said, of 5,000 families, divided by the river Trent from the Northern Mercians, whose land contains 7,000 families; but Peada was foully slain in the following spring, by the treachery, as is said, of his wife, during the very time of the Easter festival. Three years after the death of King Penda, the Mercian chiefs, Immin, and Eafa, and Eadbert, rebelled against King Oswy, setting up for their king, Wulfhere, son to the said Penda, a youth whom they had kept concealed; and expelling the ealdormen of the foreign king, they bravely recovered at once their liberty and their lands; and being thus free, together with their king, they rejoiced to serve Christ the true King, for the sake of an everlasting kingdom in heaven. This king governed the

Mercians seventeen years, and had for his first bishop Trumhere, above spoken of; the second was Jaruman; the third Ceadda; the fourth Wynfrid. All these, succeeding each other in order under King Wulfhere, discharged episcopal duties to the Mercian nation.

CHAP. 25

Interea Aidano episcopo de hac uita sublato, Finan pro illo gradum episcopatus a Scottis ordinatus ac missus acceperat. Qui in insula Lindisfarnensi fecit ecclesiam episcopali sedi congruam; quam tamen more Scottorum non de lapide, sed de robore secto totam composuit, atque harundine textit; quam tempore sequente reuerentissimus archiepiscopus Theodorus in honore beati apostoli Petri dedicauit. Sed et episcopus loci ipsius Eadberct ablata harundine, plumbi lamminis eam totam, hoc est et tectum, et ipsos quoque parietes eius, cooperire curauit.

His temporibus quaestio facta est frequens et magna de obseruatione paschae, confirmantibus eis, qui de Cantia uel de Galliis aduenerant, quod Scotti dominicum paschae diem contra uniuersalis ecclesiae morem celebrarent. Erat in his acerrimus ueri paschae defensor nomine Ronan, natione quidem Scottus, sed in Galliae uel Italiae partibus regulam ecclesiasticae ueritatis edoctus. Qui cum Finano conflagens, multos quidem correxerat, uel ad solertiorem ueritatis inquisitionem accendit, nequaquam tamen Finanum emendare potuit; quin potius, quod esset homo ferocis animi, acerbiorum castigando et apertum ueritatis aduersarium reddidit. Obseruabat autem Iacob diaconus quondam, ut supra docuimus, uenerabilis archiepiscopi Paulini, uerum et catholicum pascha cum omnibus, quos ad correctiorem uiam erudire poterat. Obseruabat et regina Eanfled cum suis, iuxta quod in Cantia fieri uiderat, habens secum de Cantia presbyterum catholicae obseruationis, nomine Romanum. Unde nonnumquam contigisse fertur illis temporibus, ut bis in anno uno pascha celebraretur, et cum rex pascha dominicum solutis ieiuniis faceret, tum regina cum suis persistens adhuc in ieiunio diem palmarum celebraret. Haec autem dissonantia paschalis obseruantiae uiuente Aidano patienter ab omnibus tolerabatur, qui patenter intellexerant, quia, etsi pascha contra morem eorum, qui ipsum miserant, facere non potuit, opera tamen fidei, pietatis, et dilectionis, iuxta morem omnibus sanctis consuetum, diligenter exsequi curauit. Unde ab omnibus, etiam his, qui de pascha aliter sentiebant, merito diligebatur; nec solum a mediocribus, uerum ab ipsis quoque episcopis, Honorio Cantuariorum, et Felice Orientalium Anglorum, uenerationi habitus est.

Defuncto autem Finano, qui post illum fuit, cum Colmanus in episcopatum succederet, et ipse missus a Scottia, grauior de obseruatione paschae, necnon et de aliis ecclesiasticae uitae disciplinis controuersia nata est. Unde merito mouit haec quaestio sensus et corda multorum, timentium, ne forte accepto Christianitatis uocabulo, in uacuum currerent aut cucurrissent.

Peruenit et ad ipsas principum aures, Osui uidelicet regis, et filii eius Alchfridi. Quia nimirum Osui a Scottis edoctus ac baptizatus, illorum etiam lingua optime inbutus, nil melius, quam quod illi docuissent, autumabat; porro

Alchfrid magistrum habens eruditionis Christianae Uilfridum uirum doctissimum (nam et Romam prius propter doctrinam ecclesiasticam adierat, et apud Dalfinum archiepiscopum Galliarum Lugdoni multum temporis egerat, a quo etiam tonsurae ecclesiasticae coronam susceperat), huius doctrinam omnibus Scottorum traditionibus iure praeferendam sciebat; unde ei etiam donauerat monasterium XL familiarum in loco, qui dicitur Inhrypum.

Quem uidelicet locum paulo ante eis, qui Scottos sequebantur, in possessionem monasterii dederat. Sed quia illi postmodum data sibi optione magis loco cedere, quam suam mutare consuetudinem uolebant, dedit eum illi, qui dignam loco et doctrinam haberet, et uitam.

Uenerat eo tempore Agilberctus Occidentalium Saxonum episcopus, cuius supra meminimus, amicus Alchfridi regis et Uilfridi abbatis, ad prouinciam Nordanhyrnbrorum, et apud eos aliquandiu demorabatur;

qui etiam Uilfridum rogatu Alchfridi in praefato suo monasterio presbyterum fecit. Habebat autem secum ipse presbyterum nomine Agathonem. Mota ergo ibi quaestione de pascha, uel tonsura, uel aliis rebus ecclesiasticis, dispositum est, ut in monasterio, quod dicitur Strenashalc, quod interpretatur sinus Fari, cui tunc Hild abbatissa Deo deuota femina praefuit, synodus fieri, et haec quaestio terminari deberet. Ueneruntque illo reges ambo, pater scilicet et filius; episcopi, Colman cum clericis suis de Scottia, Agilberctus cum Agathone et Uilfrido presbyteris. Iacobus et Romanus in horum parte erant; Hild abbatissa cum suis in parte Scottorum, in qua erat etiam uenerabilis episcopus Cedd, iamdudum ordinatus a Scottis, ut supra docuimus, qui et interpres in eo concilio uigilantissimus utriusque partis extitit.

Primusque rex Osuii praemissa praefatione, quod oporteret eos, qui uni Deo seruirent, unam uiuendi regulam tenere, nec discrepare in celebratione sacramentorum caelestium, qui unum omnes in caelis regnum expectarent; inquirendum potius, quae esset uerior traditio, et hanc ab omnibus communiter esse sequendam; iussit primo dicere episcopum suum Colmanum, qui esset ritus et unde originem ducens ille, quem ipse sequeretur. Tum Colmanus: 'Pascha,' inquit, 'hoc, quod agere soleo, a maioribus meis accepi, qui me huc episcopum miserunt, quod omnes patres nostri, uiri Deo dilecti, eodem modo celebrasse noscuntur. Quod ne cui contemnendum et reprobandum esse uideatur, ipsum est, quod beatus euangelista Iohannes, discipulus specialiter Domino dilectus, cum omnibus, quibus praeerat, ecclesiis celebrasse legitur.' Quo haec et his similia dicente, iussit rex et Agilberctum proferre in medium morem suae obseruationis, unde initium haberet, uel qua hunc auctoritate sequeretur. Respondit Agilberctus: 'Loquatur, obsecro, uice mea discipulus meus Uilfrid presbyter, quia unum ambo sapimus cum ceteris, qui hic adsident, ecclesiasticae traditionis cultoribus; et ille melius ac manifestius ipsa lingua Anglorum, quam ego per interpretem, potest explanare, quae sentimus.' Tum Uilfrid, iubente rege, ut

diceret, ita exorsus est: ‘Pasca, quod facimus,’

inquit, ‘uidimus Romae, ubi beati apostoli Petrus et Paulus uixere, docuere, passi sunt, et sepulti, ab omnibus celebrari; hoc in Italia, hoc in Gallia, quas discendi uel orandi studio pertransiuimus, ab omnibus agi conspeximus; hoc Africam, Asiam, Aegyptum, Greciam, et omnem orbem, quacumque Christi ecclesia diffusa est, per diuersas nationes et linguas, uno ac non diuerso temporis ordine geri conperimus; praeter hos tantum et obstinationis eorum complices, Pictos dico et Brettones, cum quibus de duabus ultimis oceani insulis, et his non totis, contra totum orbem stulto labore pugnant.’ Cui haec dicenti respondit Colmanus: ‘Mirum quare stultum appellare uelitis laborem nostrum, in quo tanti apostoli, qui super pectus Domini recumbere dignus fuit, exempla sectamur; cum ipsum sapientissime uixisse omnis mundus nouerit.’ At Uilfridus: ‘Absit,’ inquit, ‘ut Iohannem stultitiae reprehendamus, cum scita legis Mosaicae iuxta litteram seruaret, iudaizante adhuc in multis ecclesia, nec subito ualentibus apostolis omnem legis obseruantiam, quae a Deo instituta est, abdicare (quomodo simulacra, quae a daemonibus inuenta sunt, repudiare omnes, qui ad fidem ueniunt, necesse est), uidelicet ne scandalum facerent eis, qui inter gentes erant Iudaeis. Hinc est enim, quod Paulus Timotheum circumcidit, quod hostias in templo immolauit, quod cum Aquila et Priscilla caput Chorinti totondit; ad nihil uidelicet utile, nisi ad scandalum uitandum Iudaeorum. Hinc quod eidem Paulo Iacobus ait: “Uides, frater, quot milia sunt in Iudaeis, qui crediderunt; et omnes hi aemulatores sunt legis.” Nec tamen hodie clarescente per mundum euangelio necesse est, immo nec licitum fidelibus uel circumcidi, uel hostias Deo uictimarum offerre carnalium. Itaque Iohannes secundum legis consuetudinem XIIIa die mensis primi ad uesperam incipiebat celebrationem festi paschalis, nil curans, utrum haec sabbato, an alia qualibet feria proueniret. At uero Petrus cum Romae praedicaret, memor, quia Dominus prima sabbati resurrexit a mortuis, ac mundo spem resurrectionis contulit, ita pascha faciendum intellexit, ut secundum consuetudinem ac praecepta legis XIIIam lunam primi mensis, aequae sicut Iohannes, orientem ad uesperam semper exspectaret; et hac exorta, si dominica dies, quae tunc prima sabbati uocabatur, erat mane uentura, in ipsa uespera pascha dominicum celebrare incipiebat, quomodo et nos omnes hodie facere solemus. Sin autem dominica non proximo mane post lunam XIIIam, sed XVIa aut XVIIa aut alia qualibet luna usque ad XXIam esset uentura, exspectabat eam, et praecedente sabbato, uespere, sacrosancta paschae sollemnia inchoabat; sicque fiebat, ut dominica paschae dies nonnisi a XVa luna usque ad XXIam seruaretur. Neque haec euangelica et apostolica traditio legem soluit, sed potius adimplet, in qua obseruandum pascha a XIIIa luna primi mensis ad uesperam usque ad XXIam lunam eiusdem mensis ad uesperam praeceptum est; in quam obseruantiam imitandam omnes beati Iohannis successores in Asia post obitum eius, et omnis per orbem ecclesia conuersa est. Et hoc esse uerum pascha, hoc solum fidelibus celebrandum, Niceno concilio non statutum nouiter, sed confirmatum est, ut ecclesiastica

docet historia. Unde constat uos, Colmane, neque Iohannis, ut autumatis, exempla sectari, neque Petri, cuius traditioni scientes contradicitis, neque legi, neque euangelio in obseruatione uestri paschae congruere. Iohannes enim ad legis Mosaicae decreta tempus paschale custodiens, nil de prima sabbati curabat; quod uos non facitis, qui nonnisi prima sabbati pascha celebratis. Petrus a XVa luna usque ad XXIam diem paschae dominicum celebrabat; quod uos non facitis, qui a XIIIa usque ad XXam lunam diem dominicum paschae obseruatis; ita ut XIIIa luna ad uesperam saepius pascha incipiatis, cuius neque lex ullam fecit mentionem, neque auctor ac dator euangelii Dominus in ea, sed in XIIIa uel uetus pascha manducauit ad uesperam, uel noui testamenti sacramenta in commemorationem suae passionis ecclesiae celebranda tradidit. Item lunam XXIam, quam lex maxime celebrandam commendauit, a celebratione uestri paschae funditus eliminatis; sicque, ut dixi, in celebratione summae festiuitatis neque Iohanni, neque Petro, neque legi, neque euangelio concordatis.’

His contra Colmanus: ‘Numquid,’ ait, ‘Anatolius uir sanctus, et in praefata historia ecclesiastica multum laudatus, legi uel euangelio contraria sapuit, qui a XIIIa usque ad XXam pascha celebrandum scripsit? Numquid reuerentissimum patrem nostrum Columbam et successores eius uiros Deo dilectos, qui eodem modo pascha fecerunt, diuinis paginis contraria sapuisse uel egisse credendum est? cum plurimi fuerint in eis, quorum sanctitati caelestia signa, et uirtutum quae fecerunt miracula testimonium praebuerunt; quos ipse sanctos esse non dubitans, semper eorum uitam, mores, et disciplinam sequi non desisto.’

At Uilfridus: ‘Constat,’ inquit, ‘Anatolium uirum sanctissimum, doctissimum, ac laude esse dignissimum; sed quid uobis cum illo, cum nec eius decreta seruatis? Ille enim in pascha suo regulam utique ueritatis sequens, circulum X et VIII annorum posuit, quem uos aut ignoratis, aut agnitum et a tota Christi ecclesia custoditum pro nihilo contemnitis. Ille sic in pascha dominico XIIIam lunam computauit, ut hanc eadem ipsa die more Aegyptiorum XVam lunam ad uesperam esse fateretur. Sic item XXam die dominico paschae adnotauit, ut hanc declinata eadem die esse XXIam crederet. Cuius regulam distinctionis uos ignorasse probat, quod aliquoties pascha manifestissime ante plenilunium, id est in XIIIa luna, facitis. De patre autem uestro Columba et sequacibus eius, quorum sanctitatem uos imitari, et regulam ac praecepta caelestibus signis confirmata sequi perhibetis, possem respondere; quia multis in iudicio dicentibus Domino, quod in nomine eius prophetauerint, et daemonia eiecerint, et uirtutes multas fecerint, responsurus sit Dominus, quia numquam eos nouerit. Sed absit, ut hoc de patribus uestris dicam, quia iustius multo est de incognitis bonum credere quam malum. Unde et illos Dei famulos ac Deo dilectos esse non nego, qui simplicitate rustica, sed intentione pia Deum dilexerunt. Neque illis multum obesse reor talem paschae obseruantiam, quamdiu nullus aduenerat, qui eis instituti perfectioris

decreta, quae sequerentur, ostenderet; quos utique credo, siqui tunc ad eos catholicus calculator adueniret, sic eius monita fuisse secuturos, quomodo ea, quae nouerant ac didicerant, Dei mandata probantur fuisse secuti. Tu autem et socii tui, si audita decreta sedis apostolicae, immo uniuersalis ecclesiae, et haec litteris sacris confirmata sequi contemnitis, absque ulla dubietate peccatis. Etsi enim patres tui sancti fuerunt, numquid uniuersali, quae per orbem est, ecclesiae Christi eorum est paucitas uno de angulo extremae insulae praeferenda? Et si sanctus erat, ac potens uirtutibus ille Columba uester, immo et noster, si Christi erat, num praeferri potuit beatissimo apostolorum principi, cui Dominus ait: “Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo ecclesiam meam, et portae inferi non praeualebunt aduersus eam, et tibi dabo claues regni caelorum”?

Haec perorante Uilfrido, dixit rex: ‘Uerene, Colmane, haec illi Petro dicta sunt a Domino?’ Qui ait: ‘Uere, rex.’ At ille: ‘Habetis,’ inquit, ‘uos proferre aliquid tantae potestatis uestro Columbae datum?’ At ille ait: ‘Nihil.’ Rursum rex: ‘Si utrique uestrum,’ inquit, ‘in hoc sine ulla controuersia consentiunt, quod haec principaliter Petro dicta, et ei claues regni caelorum sint datae a Domino?’ Responderunt: ‘Etiam,’ utrique. At ille ita conclusit: ‘Et ego uobis dico, quia hic est ostiarius ille, cui ego contradicere nolo; sed, in quantum noui uel ualeo, huius cupio in omnibus oboedire statutis; ne forte, me adueniente ad fores regni caelorum, non sit qui reserat, auerso illo, qui claues tenere probatur.’

Haec dicente rege, fauerunt adsidentes quique siue adstantes maiores una cum mediocribus, et abdicata minus perfecta institutione, ad ea, quae meliora cognouerant, sese transferre festinabant.

Chap. XXV.

How the question arose about the due time of keeping Easter, with those that came out of Scotland.[664 a.d.]

In the meantime, Bishop Aidan being taken away from this life, Finan, who was ordained and sent by the Scots, succeeded him in the bishopric, and built a church in the Isle of Lindisfarne, fit for the episcopal see; nevertheless, after the manner of the Scots, he made it, not of stone, but entirely of hewn oak, and covered it with reeds; and it was afterwards dedicated in honour of the blessed Peter the Apostle, by the most reverend Archbishop Theodore. Eadbert, also bishop of that place, took off the thatch, and caused it to be covered entirely, both roof and walls, with plates of lead.

At this time, a great and frequently debated question arose about the observance of Easter; those that came from Kent or Gaul affirming, that the Scots celebrated Easter Sunday contrary to the custom of the universal Church. Among them was a most zealous defender of the true Easter, whose name was Ronan, a Scot by nation, but instructed in the rule of ecclesiastical

truth in Gaul or Italy. Disputing with Finan, he convinced many, or at least induced them to make a more strict inquiry after the truth; yet he could not prevail upon Finan, but, on the contrary, embittered him the more by reproof, and made him a professed opponent of the truth, for he was of a violent temper. James, formerly the deacon of the venerable Archbishop Paulinus, as has been said above, observed the true and Catholic Easter, with all those that he could instruct in the better way. Queen Eanfled and her followers also observed it as she had seen it practised in Kent, having with her a Kentish priest who followed the Catholic observance, whose name was Romanus. Thus it is said to have sometimes happened in those times that Easter was twice celebrated in one year; and that when the king, having ended his fast, was keeping Easter, the queen and her followers were still fasting, and celebrating Palm Sunday. Whilst Aidan lived, this difference about the observance of Easter was patiently tolerated by all men, for they well knew, that though he could not keep Easter contrary to the custom of those who had sent him, yet he industriously laboured to practise the works of faith, piety, and love, according to the custom of all holy men; for which reason he was deservedly beloved by all, even by those who differed in opinion concerning Easter, and was held in veneration, not only by less important persons, but even by the bishops, Honorius of Canterbury, and Felix of the East Angles.

But after the death of Finan, who succeeded him, when Colman, who was also sent from Scotland, came to be bishop, a greater controversy arose about the observance of Easter, and other rules of ecclesiastical life. Whereupon this question began naturally to influence the thoughts and hearts of many who feared, lest haply, having received the name of Christians, they might run, or have run, in vain. This reached the ears of the rulers, King Oswy and his son Alchfrid. Now Oswy, having been instructed and baptized by the Scots, and being very perfectly skilled in their language, thought nothing better than what they taught; but Alchfrid, having for his teacher in Christianity the learned Wilfrid, who had formerly gone to Rome to study ecclesiastical doctrine, and spent much time at Lyons with Dalfinus, archbishop of Gaul, from whom also he had received the crown of ecclesiastical tonsure, rightly thought that this man's doctrine ought to be preferred before all the traditions of the Scots. For this reason he had also given him a monastery of forty families, at a place called Inhrypum; which place, not long before, he had given for a monastery to those that were followers of the Scots; but forasmuch as they afterwards, being left to their choice, preferred to quit the place rather than alter their custom, he gave it to him, whose life and doctrine were worthy of it.

Agilbert, bishop of the West Saxons, above-mentioned, a friend of King Alchfrid and of Abbot Wilfrid, had at that time come into the province of the Northumbrians, and was staying some time among them; at the request of Alchfrid, he made Wilfrid a priest in his aforesaid monastery. He had in his

company a priest, whose name was Agatho. The question being raised there concerning Easter and the tonsure and other ecclesiastical matters, it was arranged, that a synod should be held in the monastery of Streanaeshalch, which signifies the Bay of the Lighthouse, where the Abbess Hilda, a woman devoted to the service of God, then ruled; and that there this question should be decided. The kings, both father and son, came thither, and the bishops, Colman with his Scottish clerks, and Agilbert with the priests Agatho and Wilfrid. James and Romanus were on their side; but the Abbess Hilda and her followers were for the Scots, as was also the venerable Bishop Cedd, long before ordained by the Scots, as has been said above, and he acted in that council as a most careful interpreter for both parties.

King Oswy first made an opening speech, in which he said that it behoved those who served one God to observe one rule of life; and as they all expected the same kingdom in heaven, so they ought not to differ in the celebration of the heavenly mysteries; but rather to inquire which was the truer tradition, that it might be followed by all in common; he then commanded his bishop, Colman, first to declare what the custom was which he observed, and whence it derived its origin. Then Colman said, "The Easter which I keep, I received from my elders, who sent me hither as bishop; all our forefathers, men beloved of God, are known to have celebrated it after the same manner; and that it may not seem to any contemptible and worthy to be rejected, it is the same which the blessed John the Evangelist, the disciple specially beloved of our Lord, with all the churches over which he presided, is recorded to have celebrated." When he had said thus much, and more to the like effect, the king commanded Agilbert to make known the manner of his observance and to show whence it was derived, and on what authority he followed it. Agilbert answered, "I beseech you, let my disciple, the priest Wilfrid, speak in my stead; because we both concur with the other followers of the ecclesiastical tradition that are here present, and he can better and more clearly explain our opinion in the English language, than I can by an interpreter."

Then Wilfrid, being ordered by the king to speak, began thus:— "The Easter which we keep, we saw celebrated by all at Rome, where the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, lived, taught, suffered, and were buried; we saw the same done by all in Italy and in Gaul, when we travelled through those countries for the purpose of study and prayer. We found it observed in Africa, Asia, Egypt, Greece, and all the world, wherever the Church of Christ is spread abroad, among divers nations and tongues, at one and the same time; save only among these and their accomplices in obstinacy, I mean the Picts and the Britons, who foolishly, in these two remote islands of the ocean, and only in part even of them, strive to oppose all the rest of the world." When he had so said, Colman answered, "It is strange that you choose to call our efforts foolish, wherein we follow the example of so great an Apostle, who was thought worthy to lean on our Lord's bosom, when all the world knows him to

have lived most wisely.” Wilfrid replied, “Far be it from us to charge John with folly, for he literally observed the precepts of the Mosaic Law, whilst the Church was still Jewish in many points, and the Apostles, lest they should give cause of offence to the Jews who were among the Gentiles, were not able at once to cast off all the observances of the Law which had been instituted by God, in the same way as it is necessary that all who come to the faith should forsake the idols which were invented by devils. For this reason it was, that Paul circumcised Timothy, that he offered sacrifice in the temple, that he shaved his head with Aquila and Priscilla at Corinth; for no other advantage than to avoid giving offence to the Jews. Hence it was, that James said to the same Paul, ‘Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the Law.’ And yet, at this time, when the light of the Gospel is spreading throughout the world, it is needless, nay, it is not lawful, for the faithful either to be circumcised, or to offer up to God sacrifices of flesh. So John, according to the custom of the Law, began the celebration of the feast of Easter, on the fourteenth day of the first month, in the evening, not regarding whether the same happened on a Saturday, or any other week-day. But when Peter preached at Rome, being mindful that our Lord arose from the dead, and gave to the world the hope of resurrection, on the first day of the week, he perceived that Easter ought to be kept after this manner: he always awaited the rising of the moon on the fourteenth day of the first month in the evening, according to the custom and precepts of the Law, even as John did. And when that came, if the Lord’s day, then called the first day of the week, was the next day, he began that very evening to celebrate Easter, as we all do at the present time. But if the Lord’s day did not fall the next morning after the fourteenth moon, but on the sixteenth, or the seventeenth, or any other moon till the twenty-first, he waited for that, and on the Saturday before, in the evening, began to observe the holy solemnity of Easter. Thus it came to pass, that Easter Sunday was only kept from the fifteenth moon to the twenty-first. Nor does this evangelical and apostolic tradition abolish the Law, but rather fulfil it; the command being to keep the passover from the fourteenth moon of the first month in the evening to the twenty-first moon of the same month in the evening; which observance all the successors of the blessed John in Asia, since his death, and all the Church throughout the world, have since followed; and that this is the true Easter, and the only one to be celebrated by the faithful, was not newly decreed by the council of Nicaea, but only confirmed afresh; as the history of the Church informs us.

“Thus it is plain, that you, Colman, neither follow the example of John, as you imagine, nor that of Peter, whose tradition you oppose with full knowledge, and that you neither agree with the Law nor the Gospel in the keeping of your Easter. For John, keeping the Paschal time according to the decree of the Mosaic Law, had no regard to the first day of the week, which you do not practise, seeing that you celebrate Easter only on the first day after

the Sabbath. Peter celebrated Easter Sunday between the fifteenth and the twenty-first moon, which you do not practise, seeing that you observe Easter Sunday from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon; so that you often begin Easter on the thirteenth moon in the evening, whereof neither the Law made any mention, nor did our Lord, the Author and Giver of the Gospel, on that day either eat the old passover in the evening, or deliver the Sacraments of the New Testament, to be celebrated by the Church, in memory of His Passion, but on the fourteenth. Besides, in your celebration of Easter, you utterly exclude the twenty-first moon, which the Law ordered to be specially observed. Thus, as I have said before, you agree neither with John nor Peter, nor with the Law, nor the Gospel, in the celebration of the greatest festival.”

To this Colman rejoined: “Did the holy Anatolius, much commended in the history of the Church, judge contrary to the Law and the Gospel, when he wrote, that Easter was to be celebrated from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon? Is it to be believed that our most reverend Father Columba and his successors, men beloved by God, who kept Easter after the same manner, judged or acted contrary to the Divine writings? Whereas there were many among them, whose sanctity was attested by heavenly signs and miracles which they wrought; whom I, for my part, doubt not to be saints, and whose life, customs, and discipline I never cease to follow.”

“It is evident,” said Wilfrid, “that Anatolius was a most holy, learned, and commendable man; but what have you to do with him, since you do not observe his decrees? For he undoubtedly, following the rule of truth in his Easter, appointed a cycle of nineteen years, which either you are ignorant of, or if you know it, though it is kept by the whole Church of Christ, yet you despise it as a thing of naught. He so computed the fourteenth moon in our Lord’s Paschal Feast, that according to the custom of the Egyptians, he acknowledged it to be the fifteenth moon on that same day in the evening; so in like manner he assigned the twentieth to Easter-Sunday, as believing that to be the twenty-first moon, when the sun had set. That you are ignorant of the rule of this distinction is proved by this, that you sometimes manifestly keep Easter before the full moon, that is, on the thirteenth day. Concerning your Father Columba and his followers, whose sanctity you say you imitate, and whose rule and precepts confirmed by signs from Heaven you say that you follow, I might answer, then when many, in the day of judgement, shall say to our Lord, that in His name they have prophesied, and have cast out devils, and done many wonderful works, our Lord will reply, that He never knew them. But far be it from me to speak thus of your fathers, for it is much more just to believe good than evil of those whom we know not. Wherefore I do not deny those also to have been God’s servants, and beloved of God, who with rude simplicity, but pious intentions, have themselves loved Him. Nor do I think that such observance of Easter did them much harm, as long as none came to show them a more perfect rule to follow; for assuredly I believe that, if any

teacher, reckoning after the Catholic manner, had come among them, they would have as readily followed his admonitions, as they are known to have kept those commandments of God, which they had learned and knew.

“But as for you and your companions, you certainly sin, if, having heard the decrees of the Apostolic see, nay, of the universal Church, confirmed, as they are, by Holy Scripture, you scorn to follow them; for, though your fathers were holy, do you think that those few men, in a corner of the remotest island, are to be preferred before the universal Church of Christ throughout the world? And if that Columba of yours, (and, I may say, ours also, if he was Christ’s servant,) was a holy man and powerful in miracles, yet could he be preferred before the most blessed chief of the Apostles, to whom our Lord said, ‘Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven?’ ”

When Wilfrid had ended thus, the king said, “Is it true, Colman, that these words were spoken to Peter by our Lord?” He answered, “It is true, O king!” Then said he, “Can you show any such power given to your Columba?” Colman answered, “None.” Then again the king asked, “Do you both agree in this, without any controversy, that these words were said above all to Peter, and that the keys of the kingdom of Heaven were given to him by our Lord?” They both answered, “Yes.” Then the king concluded, “And I also say unto you, that he is the door-keeper, and I will not gainsay him, but I desire, as far as I know and am able, in all things to obey his laws, lest haply when I come to the gates of the kingdom of Heaven, there should be none to open them, he being my adversary who is proved to have the keys.” The king having said this, all who were seated there or standing by, both great and small, gave their assent, and renouncing the less perfect custom, hastened to conform to that which they had found to be better.

CHAP. 26

Finitoque conflictu, ac soluta contione, Agilberctus domum rediit. Colman uidens spretam suam doctrinam, sectamque esse dispectam, adsumtis his, qui se sequi uoluerunt, id est qui pascha catholicum et tonsuram coronae (nam et de hoc quaestio non minima erat) recipere nolebant, Scottiam regressus est, tractaturus cum suis, quid de his facere deberet. Cedd, relictis Scottorum uestigiis, ad suam sedem rediit, utpote agnita obseruatione catholici paschae. Facta est autem haec quaestio anno dominicae incarnationis DCLXIIIo, qui fuit annus Osuii regis XXIIus, episcopatus autem Scottorum, quem gesserunt in prouincia Anglorum, annus XXXus; siquidem Aidan X et VII annis, Finan decem, Colman tribus episcopatum tenuere.

Reuerso autem patriam Colmano, suscepit pro illo pontificatum Nordanhymbrorum famulus Christi Tuda, qui erat apud Scottos austrinos eruditus, atque ordinatus episcopus, habens iuxta morem prouinciae illius coronam tonsurae ecclesiasticae, et catholicam temporis paschalis regulam obseruans; uir quidem bonus ac religiosus, sed permodico tempore ecclesiam regens. Uenerat autem de Scottia, tenente adhuc pontificatum Colmano, et diligenter ea, quae ad fidem ac ueritatem pertinent, et uerbo cunctos docebat, et opere.

Porro fratribus, qui in Lindisfarnensi ecclesia, Scottis abeuntibus, remanere maluerunt, praepositus est abbas iure uir reuerentissimus ac mansuetissimus Eata, qui erat abbas in monasterio, quod dicitur Mailros; quod aiunt Colmanum abiturum petisse et inpetrasse a rege Osuii, eo quod esset idem Eata unus de XII pueris Aidani, quos primo episcopatus sui tempore de natione Anglorum erudiendos in Christo accepit. Multum namque eundem episcopum Colmanum rex pro insita illi prudentia diligebat. Ipse est Eata, qui non multo post eidem ecclesiae Lindisfarnensi episcopus factus est. Abiens autem domum Colman adsumsit secum partem ossuum reuerentissimi patris Aidani; partem uero in ecclesia, cui praeerat, reliquit, et in secretario eius condi praecepit.

Quantae autem parsimoniae, cuius continentiae fuerit ipse cum prodecessoribus suis, testabatur etiam locus ille, quem regebant, ubi abeuntibus eis, excepta ecclesia, paucissimae domus repertae sunt, hoc est illae solummodo, sine quibus conuersatio ciuilis esse nullatenus poterat. Nil pecuniarum absque pecoribus habebant. Siquid enim pecuniae a diuitibus accipiebant, mox pauperibus dabant. Nam neque ad susceptionem potentium saeculi, uel pecunias colligi, uel domus praeuideri necesse fuit, qui numquam ad ecclesiam nisi orationis tantum et audiendi uerbi Dei causa ueniebant.

Rex ipse, cum oportunitas exegisset, cum V tantum aut VI ministris ueniebat, et expleta in ecclesia oratione discedebat. Quod si forte eos ibi refici contingeret, simplici tantum et cotidiano fratrum cibo contenti, nil ultra

quaerebant. Tota enim fuit tunc sollicitudo doctoribus illis Deo seruiendi, non saeculo; tota cura cordis excolendi, non uentris. Unde et in magna erat ueneratione tempore illo religionis habitus; ita ut, ubicumque clericus aliqui aut monachus adueniret, gaudenter ab omnibus tamquam Dei famulus exciperetur. Etiam si in itinere pergens inueniretur, adcurrerant, et flexa ceruice uel manu signari, uel ore illius se benedici gaudebant; uerbis quoque horum exhortatoriis diligenter auditum praebebant. Sed et diebus dominicis ad ecclesiam siue ad monasteria certatim, non reficiendi corporis, sed audiendi sermonis Dei gratia confluebant; et siquis sacerdotum in uicum forte deueniret, mox congregati in unum uicani uerbum uitae ab illo expetere curabant.

Nam neque alia ipsis sacerdotibus aut clericis uicos adeundi, quam praedicandi, baptizandi, infirmos uisitandi, et, ut breuiter dicam, animas curandi causa fuit; qui in tantum erant ab omni auaritiae peste castigati, ut nemo territoria ac possessiones ad construenda monasteria, nisi a potestatibus saeculi coactus, acciperet. Quae consuetudo per omnia aliquanto post haec tempore in ecclesiis Nordanhymbrorum seruata est. Sed de his satis dictum.

Chap. XXVI.

How Colman, being worsted, returned home; and Tuda succeeded him in the bishopric; and of the state of the church under those teachers. [664 a.d.]

The disputation being ended, and the assembly broken up, Agilbert returned home. Colman, perceiving that his doctrine was rejected, and his party despised, took with him those who wished to follow him, to wit, such as would not accept the Catholic Easter and the tonsure in the form of a crown, (for there was no small dispute about that also,) and went back into Scotland, to consult with his people what was to be done in this case. Cedd, forsaking the practices of the Scots, returned to his bishopric, having submitted to the Catholic observance of Easter. This debate took place in the year of our Lord 664, which was the twenty-second year of the reign of King Oswy, and the thirtieth of the episcopate of the Scots among the English; for Aidan was bishop seventeen years, Finan ten, and Colman three.

When Colman had gone back into his own country, Tuda, the servant of Christ, was made bishop of the Northumbrians in his place, having been instructed and ordained bishop among the Southern Scots, having also the crown of the ecclesiastical tonsure, according to the custom of that province, and observing the Catholic rule with regard to the time of Easter. He was a good and religious man, but he governed the church a very short time; he had come from Scotland whilst Colman was yet bishop, and, both by word and deed, diligently taught all men those things that appertain to the faith and truth. But Eata, who was abbot of the monastery called Mailros, a man most reverend and gentle, was appointed abbot over the brethren that chose to

remain in the church of Lindisfarne, when the Scots went away. It is said that Colman, upon his departure, requested and obtained this of King Oswy, because Eata was one of Aidan's twelve boys of the English nation, whom he received in the early years of his episcopate, to be instructed in Christ; for the king greatly loved Bishop Colman on account of his innate discretion. This is that Eata, who, not long after, was made bishop of the same church of Lindisfarne. Colman carried home with him part of the bones of the most reverend Father Aidan, and left part of them in the church where he had presided, ordering them to be interred in the sacristy.

The place which they governed shows how frugal and temperate he and his predecessors were, for there were very few houses besides the church found at their departure; indeed, no more than were barely sufficient to make civilized life possible; they had also no money, but only cattle; for if they received any money from rich persons, they immediately gave it to the poor; there being no need to gather money, or provide houses for the entertainment of the great men of the world; for such never resorted to the church, except to pray and hear the Word of God. The king himself, when occasion required, came only with five or six servants, and having performed his devotions in the church, departed. But if they happened to take a repast there, they were satisfied with the plain, daily food of the brethren, and required no more. For the whole care of those teachers was to serve God, not the world — to feed the soul, and not the belly.

For this reason the religious habit was at that time held in great veneration; so that wheresoever any clerk or monk went, he was joyfully received by all men, as God's servant; and even if they chanced to meet him upon the way, they ran to him, and with bowed head, were glad to be signed with the cross by his hand, or blessed by his lips. Great attention was also paid to their exhortations; and on Sundays they flocked eagerly to the church, or the monasteries, not to feed their bodies, but to hear the Word of God; and if any priest happened to come into a village, the inhabitants came together and asked of him the Word of life; for the priests and clerks went to the villages for no other reason than to preach, baptize, visit the sick, and, in a word, to take care of souls; and they were so purified from all taint of avarice, that none of them received lands and possessions for building monasteries, unless they were compelled to do so by the temporal authorities; which custom was for some time after universally observed in the churches of the Northumbrians. But enough has now been said on this subject.

CHAP. 27

Eodem autem anno dominicae incarnationis DCLXIII^o, facta erat eclipsis solis die tertio mensis Maii, hora circiter Xa diei; quo etiam anno subita pestilentiae lues, depopulatis prius australibus Britanniae plagis, Nordanhymbrorum quoque prouinciam corripuens, atque acerba clade diutius longe lateque desaeuiens, magnam hominum multitudinem strauit. Qua plaga praefatus Domini sacerdos Tuda raptus est de mundo, et in monasterio, quod uocatur Pagnalaech, honorifice sepultus.

Haec autem plaga Hiberniam quoque insulam pari clade premebat. Erant ibidem eo tempore multi nobilium simul et mediocrium de gente Anglorum, qui tempore Finani et Colmani episcoporum, relictis insula patria, uel diuinae lectionis, uel continentioris uitae gratia illo secesserant. Et quidam quidem mox se monasticae conuersationi fideliter mancipauerunt, alii magis circueundo per cellas magistrorum, lectioni operam dare gaudebant; quos omnes Scotti libentissime suscipientes, uictum eis cotidianum sine pretio, libros quoque ad legendum, et magisterium gratuitum praebere curabant.

Erant inter hos duo iuuenes magnae indolis de nobilibus Anglorum, Edilhun et Ecgeberct, quorum prior frater fuit Ediluini, uiri aequae Deo dilecti, qui et ipse aeuo sequente Hiberniam gratia legendi adiit, et bene instructus patriam rediit, atque episcopus in prouincia Lindissi factus, multo ecclesiam tempore nobilissime rexit. Hi ergo cum essent in monasterio, quod lingua Scottorum Rathmelsigi appellatur, et omnes socii ipsorum uel mortalitate de saeculo rapti, uel per alia essent loca dispersi, correpti sunt ambo morbo eiusdem mortalitatis, et grauissime adflicti; e quibus Ecgeberct, sicut mihi referebat quidam ueracissimus et uenerandae canitiei presbyter, qui se haec ab ipso audisse perhibebat, cum se aestimaret esse moriturum, egressus est tempore matutino de cubiculo, in quo infirmi quiescebant, et residens solus in loco oportuno, coepit sedulus cogitare de actibus suis, et compunctus memoria peccatorum suorum faciem lacrimis abluebat, atque intimo ex corde Deum precabatur, ne adhuc mori deberet, priusquam uel praeteritas neglegentias, quas in pueritia siue infantia commiserat, perfectius ex tempore castigaret, uel in bonis se operibus habundantius exerceret. Uouit etiam uotum, quia adeo peregrinus uiuere uellet, ut numquam in insulam, in qua natus est, id est Britanniam, rediret; quia praeter sollemnem canonici temporis psalmodiam, si non ualetudo corporis obsisteret, cotidie psalterium totum in memoriam diuinae laudis decantaret; quia in omni septimana diem cum nocte ieiunus transiret. Cumque finitis lacrimis, precibus, et uotis domum rediret, inuenit sodalem dormientem; et ipse quoque lectulum conscendens, coepit in quietem membra laxare. Et cum paululum quiesceret, expergefactus sodalis respexit eum, et ait: ‘O frater Ecgebercte, o quid fecisti? Sperabam, quia pariter ad uitam aeternam intraremus. Uerumtamen scito, quia, quae postulasti, accipies.’ Didicerat enim per uisionem et quid ille petisset, et quia petita

inpetrasset. Quid multa? Ipse Edilhun proxima nocte defunctus est; at uero Ecgberect decussa molestia egritudinis conualuit, ac multo postea tempore uiuens, acceptumque sacerdotii gradum condignis ornans actibus, post multa uirtutum bona, ut ipse desiderabat, nuper, id est anno dominicae incarnationis DCCXXVIIIo, cum esset ipse annorum XC, migravit ad regna caelestia. Duxit autem uitam in magna humilitatis, mansuetudinis, continentiae, simplicitatis, et iustitiae perfectione. Unde et genti suae et illis, in quibus exulabat, nationibus Scottorum siue Pictorum, exemplo uiuendi, et instantia docendi, et auctoritate corripiendi, et pietate largiendi de his, quae a diuitibus acceperat, multum profuit. Addidit autem uotis, quae diximus, ut semper in XLma non plus quam semel in die reficeret, non aliud quam panem ac lac tenuissimum, et hoc cum mensura gustaret; quod uidelicet lac pridie nouum in fiala ponere solebat, et post noctem ablata superficie crassiore, ipse residuum cum modico, ut diximus, pane bibebat. Cuius modum continentiae etiam XL diebus ante natale Domini, totidem quoque post peracta sollemnia pentecostes, hoc est Lmae, semper obseruare curabat.

Chap. XXVII.

How Egbert, a holy man of the English nation, led a monastic life in Ireland. [664 a.d.]

In the same year of our Lord 664, there happened an eclipse of the sun, on the third day of May, about the tenth hour of the day. In the same year, a sudden pestilence depopulated first the southern parts of Britain, and afterwards attacking the province of the Northumbrians, ravaged the country far and near, and destroyed a great multitude of men. By this plague the aforesaid priest of the Lord, Tuda, was carried off, and was honourably buried in the monastery called Paegnalaech. Moreover, this plague prevailed no less disastrously in the island of Ireland. Many of the nobility, and of the lower ranks of the English nation, were there at that time, who, in the days of the Bishops Finan and Colman, forsaking their native island, retired thither, either for the sake of sacred studies, or of a more ascetic life; and some of them presently devoted themselves faithfully to a monastic life, others chose rather to apply themselves to study, going about from one master's cell to another. The Scots willingly received them all, and took care to supply them with daily food without cost, as also to furnish them with books for their studies, and teaching free of charge.

Among these were Ethelhun and Egbert, two youths of great capacity, of the English nobility. The former of whom was brother to Ethelwin, a man no less beloved by God, who also at a later time went over into Ireland to study, and having been well instructed, returned into his own country, and being made bishop in the province of Lindsey, long and nobly governed the Church. These two being in the monastery which in the language of the Scots is called

Rathmelsigi, and having lost all their companions, who were either cut off by the plague, or dispersed into other places, were both seized by the same sickness, and grievously afflicted. Of these, Egbert, (as I was informed by a priest venerable for his age, and of great veracity, who declared he had heard the story from his own lips,) concluding that he was at the point of death, went out of the chamber, where the sick lay, in the morning, and sitting alone in a fitting place, began seriously to reflect upon his past actions, and, being full of compunction at the remembrance of his sins, bedewed his face with tears, and prayed fervently to God that he might not die yet, before he could forthwith more fully make amends for the careless offences which he had committed in his boyhood and infancy, or might further exercise himself in good works. He also made a vow that he would spend all his life abroad and never return into the island of Britain, where he was born; that besides singing the psalms at the canonical hours, he would, unless prevented by bodily infirmity, repeat the whole Psalter daily to the praise of God; and that he would every week fast one whole day and night. Returning home, after his tears and prayers and vows, he found his companion asleep; and going to bed himself, he began to compose himself to rest. When he had lain quiet awhile, his comrade awaking, looked on him, and said, "Alas! Brother Egbert, what have you done? I was in hopes that we should have entered together into life everlasting; but know that your prayer is granted." For he had learned in a vision what the other had requested, and that he had obtained his request.

In brief, Ethelhun died the next night; but Egbert, throwing off his sickness, recovered and lived a long time after to grace the episcopal office, which he received, by deeds worthy of it; and blessed with many virtues, according to his desire, lately, in the year of our Lord 729, being ninety years of age, he departed to the heavenly kingdom. He passed his life in great perfection of humility, gentleness, continence, simplicity, and justice. Thus he was a great benefactor, both to his own people, and to those nations of the Scots and Picts among whom he lived in exile, by the example of his life, his earnestness in teaching, his authority in reproof, and his piety in giving away of those things which he received from the rich. He also added this to the vows which we have mentioned: during Lent, he would eat but one meal a day, allowing himself nothing but bread and thin milk, and even that by measure. The milk, new the day before, he kept in a vessel, and skimming off the cream in the morning, drank the rest, as has been said, with a little bread. Which sort of abstinence he likewise always observed forty days before the Nativity of our Lord, and as many after the solemnity of Pentecost, that is, of the fifty days' festival.

CHAP. 28

Interea rex Alchfrid misit Ulfridum presbyterum ad regem Galliarum, qui eum sibi suisque consecrari faceret episcopum. At ille misit eum ordinandum ad Agilberectum, de quo supra diximus, qui, relicta Brittania, Parisiacae ciuitatis factus erat episcopus;

et consecratus est magno cum honore ab ipso, conuenientibus plurimis episcopis in uico regio, qui uocatur In Conpendio. Quo adhuc in transmarinis partibus propter ordinationem demorante, imitatus industriam filii rex Osuii misit Cantiam uirum sanctum, modestum moribus, scripturarum lectione sufficienter instructum, et ea, quae in scripturis agenda didicerat, operibus solerter exsequentem, qui Eburacensis ecclesiae ordinaretur episcopus. Erat autem presbyter uocabulo Ceadda, frater reuerentissimi antistitis Ceddi, cuius saepius meminimus, et abbas monasterii illius, quod uocatur Laestingaeu. Misitque cum eo rex presbyterum suum uocabulo Eadhaedum, qui postea regnante Ecgfrido, Hrypensis ecclesiae praesul factus est. Uerum illi Cantiam peruenientes, inuenerunt archiepiscopum Deusdedit iam migrasse de saeculo, et necdum alium pro eo constitutum fuisse pontificem. Unde deuenterunt ad prouinciam Occidentalium Saxonum, ubi erat Uini episcopus; et ab illo est uir praefatus consecratus antistes, adsumtis in societatem ordinationis duobus de Brettonum gente episcopis, qui dominicum paschae diem, ut saepius dictum est, secus morem canonicum a XIIIa usque ad XXam lunam celebrant.

Non enim erat tunc ullus, excepto illo Uine, in tota Brittania canonice ordinatus episcopus.

Consecratus ergo in episcopum Ceadda maximam mox coepit ecclesiasticae ueritati et castitati curam inpendere; humilitati, continentiae, lectioni operam dare; oppida, rura, casas, uicos, castella propter euangelizandum, non equitando, sed apostolorum more pedibus incedendo peragraré. Erat enim de discipulis Aidani, eisdemque actibus ac moribus iuxta exemplum eius ac fratris sui Ceddi suos instituere curauit auditores. Ueniens quoque Britanniam Ulfrid iam episcopus factus et ipse perplura catholicae obseruationis moderamina ccclesiis Anglorum sua doctrina contulit.

Unde factum est, ut, crescente per dies institutione catholica, Scotti omnes, qui inter Anglos morabantur, aut his manus darent, aut suam redirent ad patriam.

Chap. XXVIII.

How, when Tuda was dead, Wilfrid was ordained, in Gaul, and Ceadda, among the West Saxons, to be bishops for the province of the Northumbrians. [664 a.d.]

In the meantime, King Alchfrid sent the priest, Wilfrid, to the king of Gaul, in order that he should cause him to be consecrated bishop for himself and his people. That prince sent him to be ordained by Agilbert, of whom we have before spoken, and who, having left Britain, was made bishop of the city of Paris; and by him Wilfrid was honourably consecrated, several bishops meeting together for that purpose in a village belonging to the king, called In Compendio. He stayed some time in the parts beyond the sea for his ordination, and King Oswy, following the example of his son's zeal, sent into Kent a holy man, of modest character, well read in the Scripture, and diligently practising those things which he had learned therein, to be ordained bishop of the church of York. This was a priest called Ceadda, brother to the most reverend prelate Cedd, of whom mention has been often made, and abbot of the monastery of Laestingaeu. With him the king also sent his priest Eadhaed, who was afterwards, in the reign of Egfrid, made bishop of the church of Ripon. Now when they arrived in Kent, they found that Archbishop Deusdedit had departed this life, and no other bishop was as yet appointed in his place; whereupon they betook themselves to the province of the West Saxons, where Wini was bishop, and by him Ceadda was consecrated; two bishops of the British nation, who kept Easter Sunday, as has been often said, contrary to the canonical manner, from the fourteenth to the twentieth moon, being called in to assist at the ordination; for at that time there was no other bishop in all Britain canonically ordained, except Wini.

So Ceadda, being consecrated bishop, began immediately to labour for ecclesiastical truth and purity of doctrine; to apply himself to humility, self-denial, and study; to travel about, not on horseback, but after the manner of the Apostles, on foot, to preach the Gospel in towns, the open country, cottages, villages, and castles; for he was one of the disciples of Aidan, and endeavoured to instruct his people by the same manner of life and character, after his and his own brother Cedd's example. Wilfrid also having been now made a bishop, came into Britain, and in like manner by his teaching brought into the English Church many rules of Catholic observance. Whence it followed, that the Catholic principles daily gained strength, and all the Scots that dwelt in England either conformed to these, or returned into their own country.

CHAP. 29

His temporibus reges Anglorum nobilissimi, Osuiu prouinciae Nordanhymbrorum, et Ecgberct Cantuariorum, habito inter se consilio, quid de statu ecclesiae Anglorum esset agendum, intellexerat enim ueraciter Osuiu, quamuis educatus a Scottis, quia Romana esset catholica et apostolica ecclesia, adsumserunt cum electione et consensu sanctae ecclesiae gentis Anglorum, uirum bonum et aptum episcopatu, presbyterum nomine Uighardum, de clero Deusdedit episcopi, et hunc antistitem ordinandum Romam miserunt; quatinus accepto ipse gradu archiepiscopatus, catholicos per omnem Brittaniam ecclesiis Anglorum ordinare posset antistites.

Uerum Uighard Romam perueniens, priusquam consecrari in episcopatum posset, morte praereptus est, et huiusmodi litterae regi Osuiu Brittaniam remissae:

Domino excellenti filio Osuio regi Saxonum Uitalianus episcopus, seruus seruorum Dei.

Desiderabiles litteras excellentiae uestrae suscepimus; quas relegentes cognouimus eius piissimam deuotionem, feruentissimumque amorem, quem habet propter beatam uitam; et quia dextera Domini protegente, ad ueram et apostolicam fidem sit conuersus, sperans, sicut in sua gente regnat, ita et cum Christo de futuro conregnare.

Benedicta igitur gens, quae talem sapientissimum et Dei cultorem promeruit habere regem; quia non solum ipse Dei cultor extitit, sed etiam omnes subiectos suos meditatur die ac nocte ad fidem catholicam atque apostolicam pro suae animae redemptione conuerti.

Quis enim audiens haec suauius non laetetur? Quis non exultet et gaudeat in his piis operibus? Quia et gens uestra Christo omnipotenti Deo credidit secundum diuinorum prophetarum uoces, sicut scriptum est in Isaia: ‘In die illa radix Iesse, qui stat in signum populorum, ipsum gentes deprecabuntur.’ Et iterum: ‘Audite insulae, et attendite populi de longe.’ Et post paululum: ‘Parum,’

inquit, ‘est, ut mihi sis seruus ad suscitandas tribus Iacob, et feces Israel conuertendas. Dedi te in lucem gentium, ut sis salus mea usque ad extremum terrae.’ Et rursum: ‘Reges uidebunt, et consurgent principes, et adorabunt.’ Et post pusillum: ‘Dedi te in foedus populi, ut suscitares terram, et possideres hereditates dissipatas, et diceres his, qui uincti sunt: “Exite,” et his, qui in tenebris: “Reuelamini.”’ Et rursum: ‘Ego Dominus uocaui te in iustitia, et adprehendi manum tuam, et seruauit, et dedi te in foedus populi, in lucem gentium, ut aperires oculos caecorum, et educeres de conclusione uinctum, de domo carceris sedentes in tenebris.’

Ecce, excellentissime fili, quam luce clarius est, non solum de uobis, sed

etiam de omnibus prophetatum gentibus, quod sint crediturae in Christo omnium conditore. Quamobrem oportet uestram celsitudinem, utpote membrum existens Christi, in omnibus piam regulam sequi perenniter principis apostolorum, siue in pascha celebrandum, siue in omnibus, quae tradiderunt sancti apostoli Petrus et Paulus, qui ut duo luminaria caeli inluminant mundum, sic doctrina eorum corda hominum cotidie inlustrat credentium.’

Et post nonnulla, quibus de celebrando per orbem totum uno uero pascha loquitur:

‘Hominem denique,’ inquit, ‘docibilem et in omnibus ornatum antistitem, secundum uestrorum scriptorum tenorem, minime ualuimus nunc repperire pro longinquitate itineris. Profecto enim dum huiusmodi apta reppertaque persona fuerit, eum instructum ad uestram dirigemus patriam, ut ipse et uiua uoce, et per diuina oracula omnem inimici zizaniam ex omni uestra insula cum diuino nutu eradicet.

Munuscula a uestra celsitudine beato principi apostolorum directa pro aeterna eius memoria suscepimus, gratiasque ei agimus, ac pro eius incolumitate iugiter Deum deprecamur cum Christi clero. Itaque qui haec obtulit munera, de hac subtractus est lucc, situsque ad limina apostolorum, pro quo ualde sumus contristati, cum hic esset defunctus. Ucrumtamen gerulis harum nostrarum litterarum uestris missis, et beneficia sanctorum, hoc est reliquias beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, et sanctorum martyrum Laurentii, Iohannis, et Pauli, et Gregorii, atque Pancratii eis fecimus dari, uestrae excellentiae profecto omnes contradendas. Nam et coniugi uestrae, nostrae spiritali filiae, direximus per praefatos gerulos crucem clauem auream habentem de sacratissimis uinculis beatorum Petri et Pauli apostolorum; de cuius pio studio cognoscentes, tantum cuncta sedes apostolica una nobiscum laetatur, quantum eius pia opera coram Deo flagrant et uernant. Festinet igitur, quaesumus, uestra celsitudo, ut optamus, totam suam insulam Deo Christo dicare.

Profecto enim habet protectorem, humani generis redemptorem Dominum nostrum Iesum Christum, qui ei cuncta prospera inpertiet, uti nouum Christi populum coaceruet, catholicam ibi et apostolicam constituens fidem. Scriptum est enim: ‘Quaerite primum regnum Dei et iustitiam eius, et haec omnia adicientur uobis.’ Nimirum enim quaerit et inpetrabit, et ei omnes suae insulae, ut optamus, subdentur.

Paterno itaque affectu salutantes uestram excellentiam, diuinam precamur iugiter clementiam, quae uos uestrosque omnes in omnibus bonis operibus auxiliari dignetur, ut cum Christo in futuro regnetis saeculo. Incolumem excellentiam uestram gratia superna custodiat.’ Quis sane pro Uighardo reppertus ac dedicatus sit antistes, libro sequente opportunius dicetur.

How the priest Wighard was sent from Britain to Rome, to be ordained archbishop; of his death there, and of the letters of the Apostolic Pope giving an account thereof. [667 a.d.]

At this time the most noble kings of the English, Oswy, of the province of the Northumbrians, and Egbert of Kent, consulted together to determine what ought to be done about the state of the English Church, for Oswy, though educated by the Scots, had rightly perceived that the Roman was the Catholic and Apostolic Church. They selected, with the consent and by the choice of the holy Church of the English nation, a priest named Wighard, one of Bishop Deusdedit's clergy, a good man and fitted for the episcopate, and sent him to Rome to be ordained bishop, to the end that, having been raised to the rank of an archbishop, he might ordain Catholic prelates for the Churches of the English nation throughout all Britain. But Wighard, arriving at Rome, was cut off by death, before he could be consecrated bishop, and the following letter was sent back into Britain to King Oswy: —

“To the most excellent lord, our son, Oswy, king of the Saxons, Vitalian, bishop, servant of the servants of God. We have received to our comfort your Excellency's letters; by reading whereof we are acquainted with your most pious devotion and fervent love of the blessed life; and know that by the protecting hand of God you have been converted to the true and Apostolic faith, in hope that even as you reign in your own nation, so you may hereafter reign with Christ. Blessed be the nation, therefore, that has been found worthy to have as its king one so wise and a worshipper of God; forasmuch as he is not himself alone a worshipper of God, but also studies day and night the conversion of all his subjects to the Catholic and Apostolic faith, to the redemption of his own soul. Who would not rejoice at hearing such glad tidings? Who would not exult and be joyful at these good works? For your nation has believed in Christ the Almighty God, according to the words of the Divine prophets, as it is written in Isaiah, ‘In that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek.’ And again, ‘Listen, O isles, unto me, and hearken ye people from far.’ And a little after, ‘It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the outcast of Israel. I have given thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayst be my salvation unto the end of the earth.’ And again, ‘Kings shall see, princes also shall arise and worship.’ And immediately after, ‘I have given thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, and possess the scattered heritages; that thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, Show yourselves.’ And again, ‘I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and have held thine hand, and have kept thee, and have given thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoner from the prison, and them that sit in darkness from the prison-house.’

“Behold, most excellent son, how it is plain as day that it was prophesied

not only of you, but also of all the nations, that they should believe in Christ, the Creator of all things. Wherefore it behoves your Highness, as being a member of Christ, in all things continually to follow the pious rule of the chief of the Apostles, in celebrating Easter, and in all things delivered by the holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, whose doctrine daily enlightens the hearts of believers, even as the two lights of heaven illumine the world."

And after some lines, wherein he speaks of celebrating the true Easter uniformly throughout all the world, —

"Finally," he adds, "we have not been able now, on account of the length of the journey, to find a man, apt to teach, and qualified in all respects to be a bishop, according to the tenor of your letters. But, assuredly, as soon as such a fit person shall be found, we will send him well instructed to your country, that he may, by word of mouth, and through the Divine oracles, with the blessing of God, root out all the enemy's tares throughout your island. We have received the presents sent by your Highness to the blessed chief of the Apostles, for an eternal memorial of him, and return you thanks, and always pray for your safety with the clergy of Christ. But he that brought these presents has been removed out of this world, and is buried at the threshold of the Apostles, for whom we have been much grieved, because he died here. Nevertheless, we have caused the blessed gifts of the saints, that is, the relics of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, and of the holy martyrs, Laurentius, John, and Paul, and Gregory, and Pancratius, to be given to your servants, the bearers of these our letters, to be by them delivered to your Excellency. And to your consort also, our spiritual daughter, we have by the aforesaid bearers sent a cross, with a gold key to it, made out of the most holy chains of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul; for, hearing of her pious zeal, all the Apostolic see rejoices with us, even as her pious works smell sweet and blossom before God.

"We therefore desire that your Highness should hasten, according to our wish, to dedicate all your island to Christ our God; for assuredly you have for your Protector, the Redeemer of mankind, our Lord Jesus Christ, Who will prosper you in all things, that you may gather together a new people of Christ, establishing there the Catholic and Apostolic faith. For it is written, 'Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.' Truly your Highness seeks, and shall obtain, and all your islands shall be made subject to you, even as we desire. Saluting your Excellency with fatherly affection, we never cease to pray to the Divine Goodness, to vouchsafe to assist you and yours in all good works, that you may reign with Christ in the world to come. May the Heavenly Grace preserve your Excellency in safety!"

In the next book we shall have a more suitable occasion to show who was selected and consecrated in Wighard's place.

CHAP. 30

Eodem tempore prouinciae Orientalium Saxonum post Suidhelmum, de quo supra diximus, praefuere reges Sigheri et Sebbi, quamuis ipsi regi Merciorum Uulfhera subiecti. Quae uidelicet prouincia cum praefatae mortalitatis clade premeretur, Sigheri cum sua parte populi, relictis Christianae fidei sacramentis, ad apostasiam conuersus est. Nam et ipse rex et plurimi de plebe siue optimatibus, diligentes hanc uitam, et futuram non quaerentes, siue etiam non esse credentes, coeperunt fana, quae derelicta erant, restaurare, et adorare simulacra, quasi per haec possent a mortalitate defendi. Porro socius eius et coheres regni eiusdem, Sebbi, magna fidem perceptam cum suis omnibus deuotione seruauit, magna, ut in sequentibus dicemus, uitam fidelem felicitate conpleuit. Quod ubi rex Uulfheri conperit, fidem uidelicet prouinciae ex parte profanatam, misit ad corrigendum errorem, reuocandamque ad fidem ueritatis prouinciam Iaruman episcopum, qui successor erat Trumheri. Qui multa agens solertia, iuxta quod mihi presbyter, qui comes itineris illi et cooperatur uerbi extiterat, referebat, erat enim religiosus et bonus uir, longe lateque omnia peruagatus, et populum et regem praefatum ad uiam iustitiae reduxit; adeo ut relictis siue destructis fanis arisque, quas fecerant, aperirent ecclesias, ac nomen Christi, cui contradixerant, confiteri gauderent, magis cum fide resurrectionis in illo mori, quam in perfidiae sordibus inter idola uiuere cupientes. Quibus ita gestis, et ipsi sacerdotes doctoresque eorum domum rediere laetantes.

Chap. XXX.

How the East Saxons, during a pestilence, returned to idolatry, but were soon brought back from their error by the zeal of Bishop Jaruman. [665 a.d.]

At the same time, the Kings Sighere and Sebbi, though themselves subject to Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, governed the province of the East Saxons after Suidhelm, of whom we have spoken above. When that province was suffering from the aforesaid disastrous plague, Sighere, with his part of the people, forsook the mysteries of the Christian faith, and turned apostate. For the king himself, and many of the commons and nobles, loving this life, and not seeking after another, or even not believing in any other, began to restore the temples that had been abandoned, and to adore idols, as if they might by those means be protected against the plague. But Sebbi, his companion and co-heir in the kingdom, with all his people, very devoutly preserved the faith which he had received, and, as we shall show hereafter, ended his faithful life in great felicity.

King Wulfhere, hearing that the faith of the province was in part profaned, sent Bishop Jaruman, who was successor to Trumhere, to correct their error,

and recall the province to the true faith. He acted with much discretion, as I was informed by a priest who bore him company in that journey, and had been his fellow labourer in the Word, for he was a religious and good man, and travelling through all the country, far and near, brought back both the people and the aforesaid king to the way of righteousness, so that, either forsaking or destroying the temples and altars which they had erected, they opened the churches, and gladly confessed the Name of Christ, which they had opposed, choosing rather to die in the faith of resurrection in Him, than to live in the abominations of unbelief among their idols. Having thus accomplished their works, the priests and teachers returned home with joy.

LIBER QUARTUS — BOOK IV

CHAP. 1

Anno memorato praefatae eclypsis et mox sequentis pestilentiae, quo et Colman episcopus unanima catholicorum intentione superatus ad suos reuersus est, Deusdedit VIus ecclesiae Doruuernensis episcopus obiit pridie Iduum Iuliarum; sed et Erconberct rex Cantuariorum eodem mense ac die defunctus, Ecgbercto filio sedem regni reliquit, quam ille susceptam per VIII annos tenuit. Tunc cessante non paucio tempore episcopatu, missus est Romam ab ipso simul et a rege Nordanhymbrorum Osuio, ut in praecedente libro paucis diximus, Uighard presbyter, uir in ecclesiasticis disciplinis doctissimus, de genere Anglorum, petentibus hunc ecclesiae Anglorum archiepiscopum ordinari; missis pariter apostolico papae donariis, et aureis atque argenteis uasis non paucis. Qui ubi Romam peruenit, cuius sedi apostolicae tempore illo Uitalianus praeerat, postquam itineris sui causam praefato papae apostolico patefecit, non multo post et ipse, et omnes pene qui cum eo aduenerant socii, pestilentia superueniente deleti sunt.

At apostolicus papa habito de his consilio, quaesiuit sedulus, quem ecclesiis Anglorum archiepiscopum mitteret. Erat autem in monasterio Niridano, quod est non longe a Neapoli Campaniae, abbas Hadrianus, uir natione Afir, sacris litteris diligenter inbutus, monasterialibus simul et ecclesiasticis disciplinis institutus, Graecae pariter et Latinae linguae peritissimus. Hunc ad se accitum papa iussit episcopatu accepto Britanniam uenire. Qui indignum se tanto gradui respondens, ostendere posse se dixit alium, cuius magis ad suscipiendum episcopatum et eruditio conueniret, et aetas. Cumque monachum quendam de uicino uirginum monasterio, nomine Andream, pontifici offerret, hic ab omnibus, qui nouere, dignus episcopatu iudicatus est. Uerum pondus corporeae infirmitatis, ne episcopus fieri posset, obstitit. Et rursum Hadrianus ad suscipiendum episcopatum actus est; qui petens indutias, si forte alium, qui episcopus ordinaretur, ex tempore posset inuenire.

Erat ipso tempore Romae monachus Hadriano notus, nomine Theodorus, natus Tarso Ciliciae, uir et saeculari et diuina litteratura, et Grece instructus et Latine, probus moribus, et aetate uenerandus, id est annos habens aetatis LX et VI. Hunc offerens Hadrianus pontifici, ut episcopus ordinaretur, obtinuit; his tamen condicionibus interpositis, ut ipse eum perduceret Britanniam, eo quod iam bis partes Galliarum diuersis ex causis adisset, et ob id maiorem huius itineris peragendi notitiam haberet, sufficiensque esset in possessione hominum propriorum; et ut ei doctrinae cooperatore existens diligenter adtenderet, ne quid ille contrarium ueritati fidei, Grecorum more, in ecclesiam, cui praeesset, introduceret. Qui subdiaconus ordinatus III exspectauit menses, donec illi coma cresceret, quo in coronam tondi posset; habuerat enim tonsuram more orientalium sancti apostoli Pauli. Qui ordinatus est a Uitaliano papa anno dominicae incarnationis DCLXVIII, sub die VII.

Kalendarum Aprilium, dominica. Et ita una cum Hadriano VI.

Kalendas Iunias Britanniam missus est. Qui cum pariter per mare ad Massiliam, ac deinde per terram Arhelas peruenissent, et tradidissent Iohanni archiepiscopo ciuitatis illius scripta commendaticia Uitaliani pontificis, retenti sunt ab eo, quousque Ebrinus maior domus regiae copiam pergendi, quoquo uellent, tribuit eis. Qua accepta Theodorus profectus est ad Agilbertum Parisiorum episcopum, de quo superius diximus, et ab eo benigne susceptus, et multo tempore habitus est. Hadrianus perrexit primum ad Emme Senonum, et postea ad Faronem Meldorum episcopos, et bene sub eis diutius fuit; coegerat enim eos imminens hiems, ut, ubicumque potuissent, quieti manerent. Quod cum nuntii certi narrassent regi Ecgercto, esse scilicet episcopum, quem petierant a Romano antistite in regno Francorum, misit illo continuo Raedfridum praefectum suum ad adducendum eum; quo cum uenisset, adsumsit Theodorum cum Ebrini licentia, et perduxit eum ad portum, cui nomen est Quentauc; ubi fatigatus infirmitate aliquantisper moratus est, et, cum conualescere coepisset, nauigauit Britanniam. Hadrianum autem Ebrinus retinuit, quoniam suspicabatur eum habere aliquam legationem imperatoris ad Britanniae reges aduersus regnum, cuius tunc ipse maximam curam gerebat. Sed cum nihil tale illum habere uel habuisse ueraciter conperisset, absoluit eum, et post Theodorum ire permisit. Qui statim ut ad illum uenit, dedit ei monasterium beati Petri apostoli, ubi archiepiscopi Cantiae sepeliri, ut praefatus sum, solent. Praeceperat enim Theodoro abeunti domnus apostolicus, ut in diocesi sua prouideret, et daret ei locum, in quo cum suis apte degere potuisset.

Chap. I.

How when Deusdedit died, Wighard was sent to Rome to receive the episcopate; but he dying there, Theodore was ordained archbishop, and sent into Britain with the Abbot Hadrian. [664-669 a.d.]

In the above-mentioned year of the aforesaid eclipse and of the pestilence which followed it immediately, in which also Bishop Colman, being overcome by the united effort of the Catholics, returned home, Deusdedit, the sixth bishop of the church of Canterbury, died on the 14th of July. Earconbert, also, king of Kent, departed this life the same month and day; leaving his kingdom to his son Egbert, who held it for nine years. The see then became vacant for no small time, until, the priest Wighard, a man of great learning in the teaching of the Church, of the English race, was sent to Rome by King Egbert and Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, as was briefly mentioned in the foregoing book, with a request that he might be ordained Archbishop of the Church of England; and at the same time presents were sent to the Apostolic pope, and many vessels of gold and silver. Arriving at Rome, where Vitalian presided at that time over the Apostolic see, and having made known to the

aforesaid Apostolic pope the occasion of his journey, he was not long after carried off, with almost all his companions who had come with him, by a pestilence which fell upon them.

But the Apostolic pope having consulted about that matter, made diligent inquiry for some one to send to be archbishop of the English Churches. There was then in the monastery of Niridanum, which is not far from Naples in Campania, an abbot called Hadrian, by nation an African, well versed in Holy Scripture, trained in monastic and ecclesiastical teaching, and excellently skilled both in the Greek and Latin tongues. The pope, sending for him, commanded him to accept the bishopric and go to Britain. He answered, that he was unworthy of so great a dignity, but said that he could name another, whose learning and age were fitter for the episcopal office. He proposed to the pope a certain monk named Andrew, belonging to a neighbouring nunnery and he was by all that knew him judged worthy of a bishopric; but the weight of bodily infirmity prevented him from becoming a bishop. Then again Hadrian was urged to accept the episcopate; but he desired a respite, to see whether in time he could find another to be ordained bishop.

There was at that time in Rome, a monk, called Theodore, known to Hadrian, born at Tarsus in Cilicia, a man instructed in secular and Divine writings, as also in Greek and Latin; of high character and venerable age, being sixty-six years old. Hadrian proposed him to the pope to be ordained bishop, and prevailed; but upon the condition that he should himself conduct him into Britain, because he had already travelled through Gaul twice upon different occasions, and was, therefore, better acquainted with the way, and was, moreover, sufficiently provided with men of his own; as also, to the end that, being his fellow labourer in teaching, he might take special care that Theodore should not, according to the custom of the Greeks, introduce any thing contrary to the truth of the faith into the Church where he presided. Theodore, being ordained subdeacon, waited four months for his hair to grow, that it might be shorn into the shape of a crown; for he had before the tonsure of St. Paul, the Apostle, after the manner of the eastern people. He was ordained by Pope Vitalian, in the year of our Lord 668, on Sunday, the 26th of March, and on the 27th of May was sent with Hadrian to Britain.

They proceeded together by sea to Marseilles, and thence by land to Arles, and having there delivered to John, archbishop of that city, Pope Vitalian's letters of recommendation, were by him detained till Ebroin, the king's mayor of the palace, gave them leave to go where they pleased. Having received the same, Theodore went to Agilbert, bishop of Paris, of whom we have spoken above, and was by him kindly received, and long entertained. But Hadrian went first to Emme, Bishop of the Senones, and then to Faro, bishop of the Meldi, and lived in comfort with them a considerable time; for the approach of winter had obliged them to rest wherever they could. King Egbert, being informed by sure messengers that the bishop they had asked of the Roman

prelate was in the kingdom of the Franks, sent thither his reeve, Raedfrid, to conduct him. He, having arrived there, with Ebroin's leave took Theodore and conveyed him to the port called Quentavic; where, falling sick, he stayed some time, and as soon as he began to recover, sailed over into Britain. But Ebroin detained Hadrian, suspecting that he went on some mission from the Emperor to the kings of Britain, to the prejudice of the kingdom of which he at that time had the chief charge; however, when he found that in truth he had never had any such commission, he discharged him, and permitted him to follow Theodore. As soon as he came to him, Theodore gave him the monastery of the blessed Peter the Apostle, where the archbishops of Canterbury are wont to be buried, as I have said before; for at his departure, the Apostolic lord had enjoined upon Theodore that he should provide for him in his province, and give him a suitable place to live in with his followers.

CHAP. 2

Peruenit autem Theodorus ad ecclesiam suam secundo postquam consecratus est anno, sub die VI. Kalendarum Iuniarum, dominica, et fecit in ea annos XX et unum, menses III, dies XXVI. Moxque peragrata insula tota, quaquaersum Anglorum gentes morabantur, nam et libentissime ab omnibus suscipiebatur, atque audiebatur, rectum uiuendi ordinem, ritum celebrandi paschae canonicum, per omnia comitante et cooperante Hadriano disseminabat. Isque primus erat in archiepiscopis, cui omnis Anglorum ecclesia manus dare consentiret.

Et quia litteris sacris simul et saecularibus, ut diximus, abundanter ambo erant instructi, congregata discipulorum caterua, scientiae salutaris cotidie flumina inrigandis eorum cordibus emanabant; ita ut etiam metricae artis, astronomiae, et arithmeticae ecclesiasticae disciplinam inter sacrorum apicum uolumina suis auditoribus contraderent. Indicio est, quod usque hodie supersunt de eorum discipulis, qui Latinam Grecamque linguam aequae ut propriam, in qua nati sunt, norunt. Neque umquam prorsus, ex quo Britanniam petierunt Angli, felicitiora fuere tempora; dum et fortissimos Christianosque habentes reges cunctis barbaris nationibus essent terrori, et omnium uota ad nuper audita caelestis regni gaudia penderent, et quicumque lectionibus sacris cuperent erudiri, haberent in promptu magistros, qui docerent.

Sed et sonos cantandi in ecclesia, quos eatenus in Cantia tantum nouerant, ab hoc tempore per omnes Anglorum ecclesias discere coeperunt; primusque, excepto Iacobo, de quo supra diximus, cantandi magister Nordanhymbrorum ecclesiis Aeddi cognomento Stephanus fuit, inuitatus de Cantia a reuerentissimo uiro Uilfrido, qui primus inter episcopos, qui de Anglorum gente essent, catholicum uiuendi morem ecclesiis Anglorum tradere didicit.

Itaque Theodorus perlustrans uniuersa, ordinabat locis oportunis episcopos, et ea, quae minus perfecta repperit, his quoque iuuantibus corripiebat. In quibus et Ceadda episcopum cum argueret non fuisse rite consecratum, respondens ipse uoce humillima: ‘Si me,’ inquit, ‘nosti episcopatum non rite suscepisse, libenter ab officio discedo; quippe qui neque me umquam hoc esse dignum arbitrabar; sed oboedientiae causa iussus subire hoc, quamuis indignus, consensi.’ At ille audiens humilitatem responsi eius, dixit non eum episcopatum dimittere debere; sed ipse ordinationem eius denuo catholica ratione consummauit. Eo autem tempore, quo defuncto Deusdedit Doruuernensi ecclesiae episcopus quaerebatur, ordinabatur, mittebatur, Uilfrid quoque de Britania Galliam ordinandus est missus; et quoniam ante Theodorum rediit, ipse etiam in Cantia presbyteros et diaconos, usquedum archiepiscopus ad sedem suam perueniret, ordinabat. At ipse ueniens mox in ciuitate Hrofi, ubi defuncto Damiano episcopatus iam diu cessauerat, ordinauit uirum magis ecclesiasticis disciplinis institutum, et uitae simplicitate

contentum, quam in saeculi rebus strenuum cui nomen erat Putta;

maxime autem modulandi in ecclesia more Romanorum, quem a discipulis beati papae Gregorii didicerat, peritum.

Chap. II.

How Theodore visited all places; how the Churches of the English began to be instructed in the study of Holy Scripture, and in the Catholic truth; and how Putta was made bishop of the Church of Rochester in the room of Damianus. [669 a.d.]

Theodore came to his Church in the second year after his consecration, on Sunday, the 27th of May, and spent in it twenty-one years, three months, and twenty-six days. Soon after, he visited all the island, wherever the tribes of the English dwelt, for he was gladly received and heard by all persons; and everywhere attended and assisted by Hadrian, he taught the right rule of life, and the canonical custom of celebrating Easter. This was the first archbishop whom all the English Church consented to obey. And forasmuch as both of them were, as has been said before, fully instructed both in sacred and in secular letters, they gathered a crowd of disciples, and rivers of wholesome knowledge daily flowed from them to water the hearts of their hearers; and, together with the books of Holy Scripture, they also taught them the metrical art, astronomy, and ecclesiastical arithmetic. A testimony whereof is, that there are still living at this day some of their scholars, who are as well versed in the Greek and Latin tongues as in their own, in which they were born. Nor were there ever happier times since the English came into Britain; for having brave Christian kings, they were a terror to all barbarous nations, and the minds of all men were bent upon the joys of the heavenly kingdom of which they had but lately heard; and all who desired to be instructed in sacred studies had masters at hand to teach them.

From that time also they began in all the churches of the English to learn Church music, which till then had been only known in Kent. And, excepting James, of whom we have spoken above, the first teacher of singing in the churches of the Northumbrians was Eddi, surnamed Stephen, invited from Kent by the most reverend Wilfrid, who was the first of the bishops of the English nation that learned to deliver to the churches of the English the Catholic manner of life.

Theodore, journeying through all parts, ordained bishops in fitting places, and with their assistance corrected such things as he found faulty. Among the rest, when he charged Bishop Ceadda with not having been duly consecrated, he, with great humility, answered, "If you know that I have not duly received episcopal ordination, I willingly resign the office, for I never thought myself worthy of it; but, though unworthy, for obedience sake I submitted, when bidden to undertake it." Theodore, hearing his humble answer, said that he

should not resign the bishopric, and he himself completed his ordination after the Catholic manner. Now at the time when Deusdedit died, and a bishop for the church of Canterbury was by request ordained and sent, Wilfrid was also sent from Britain into Gaul to be ordained; and because he returned before Theodore, he ordained priests and deacons in Kent till the archbishop should come to his see. But when Theodore came to the city of Rochester, where the bishopric had been long vacant by the death of Damian, he ordained a man named Putta, trained rather in the teaching of the Church and more addicted to simplicity of life than active in worldly affairs, but specially skilful in Church music, after the Roman use, which he had learned from the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory.

CHAP. 3

Eo tempore prouinciae Merciorum rex Uulfheri praefuit, qui, cum mortuo Iarumanno sibi quoque suisque a Theodoro episcopum dari peteret, non eis nouum uoluit ordinare episcopum; sed postulauit a rege Osuio, ut illis episcopus Ceadda daretur, qui tunc in monasterio suo, quod est in Lastingae, quietam uitam agebat, Uilfrido administrante episcopatum Eboracensis ecclesiae, nec non et omnium Nordanhymbrorum, sed et Pictorum, quousque rex Osuii imperium protendere poterat. Et quia moris erat eidem reuerentissimo antistiti opus euangelii magis ambulando per loca, quam equitando perficere, iussit eum Theodorus, ubicumque longius iter instaret, equitare, multumque renitentem, studio et amore pii laboris, ipse eum manu sua leuauit in equum; quia nimirum sanctum esse uirum conperiit, atque equo uehi, quo esset necesse, compulit. Susceptum itaque episcopatum gentis Merciorum simul et Lindisfarorum Ceadda, iuxta exempla patrum antiquorum, in magna uitae perfectione administrare curauit; cui etiam rex Uulfheri donauit terram L familiarum ad construendum monasterium in loco, qui dicitur Adbaruae, id est Ad Nemus, in prouincia Lindissi, in quo usque hodie instituta ab ipso regularis uitae uestigia permanent.

Habuit autem sedem episcopalem in loco, qui uocatur Lyccidfelth, in quo et defunctus ac sepultus est; ubi usque hodie sequentium quoque prouinciae illius episcoporum sedes est. Fecerat uero sibi mansionem non longe ab ecclesia remotiorem; in qua secretius cum paucis, id est VII siue VIII, fratribus, quoties a labore et ministerio uerbi uacabat, orare ac legere solebat. Qui cum in illa prouincia duobus annis ac dimidio ecclesiam gloriosissime rexisset, adfuit superno dispensante iudicio tempus, de quo loquitur Ecclesiastes, quia: 'Tempus mittendi lapides, et tempus colligendi.' Superuenit namque clades diuinitus missa, quae per mortem carnis uiuos ecclesiae lapides de terrenis sedibus ad aedificium caeleste transferret. Cumque plurimis de ecclesia eiusdem reuerentissimi antistitis de carne subtractis, ueniret hora ipsius, ut transiret ex hoc mundo ad Dominum, contigit die quadam, ut in praefata mansionem forte ipse cum uno tantum fratre, cui uocabulum erat Ouini, commoraretur, ceteris eius sociis pro causa oportuna ad ecclesiam reuersis. Erat autem idem Ouini monachus magni meriti, et pura intentione supernae retributionis mundum derelinquens, dignusque per omnia, cui Dominus specialiter sua reuelaret arcana, dignus, cui fidem narranti audientes accommodarent. Uenerat enim cum regina Aedilthryde de prouincia Orientalium Anglorum, eratque primus ministrorum, et princeps domus eius. Qui cum crescente fidei feruore saeculo abrenunciare disponderet, non hoc segniter fecit; sed adeo se mundi rebus exiit, ut relictis omnibus, quae habebat, simplici tantum habitu indutus, et securim atque asciam in manu ferens, ueniret ad monasterium eiusdem reuerentissimi patris, quod uocatur Laestingaeu. Non enim ad otium, ut quidam, sed ad laborem se

monasterium intrare signabat. Quod ipsum etiam facto monstrauit; nam quominus sufficebat meditationi scripturarum, eo amplius operi manuum studium impendebat. Denique cum episcopo in praefata mansione pro suae reuerentiae deuotionis inter fratres habitus, cum illi intus lectioni uacabant, ipse foris, quae opus esse uidebantur, operabatur. Qui cum die quadam tale aliquid foris ageret, digressis ad ecclesiam sociis, ut dicere coeperam, et episcopus solus in oratorio loci lectioni uel orationi operam daret, diuit repente, ut postea referebat, uocem suauissimam cantantium atque laetantium de caelo ad terras usque descendere; quam uidelicet uocem ab Euroaustro, id est ab alto brumalis exortus, primo se audisse dicebat, ac deinde paulatim eam sibi adpropriare, donec ad tectum usque oratorii, in quo erat episcopus, perueniret; quod ingressa, totum impleuit, atque in gyro circumdedit. At ille dum sollicitus in ea, quae audiebat, animum intenderet, audiuit denuo, transacto quasi dimidiae horae spatio, ascendere de tecto eiusdem oratorii idem laetitiae canticum, et ipsa, qua uenerat, uia ad caelos usque cum ineffabili dulcedine reuerti. Qui cum aliquantulum horae quasi adtonitus maneret, et, quid haec essent, solerti animo scrutaretur, aperuit episcopus fenestram oratorii, et sonitum manu faciens, ut saepius consueuerat, siqui foris esset, ad se intrare praecepit. Introiuit ille concitus, cui dixit antistes: ‘Uade cito ad ecclesiam, et hos VII fratres huc uenire facito; tu quoque simul adesto.’ Qui cum uenissent, primo admonuit eos, ut uirtutem dilectionis et pacis ad inuicem et ad omnes fideles seruarent;

instituta quoque disciplinae regularis, quae uel ab ipso didicissent, et in ipso uidissent, uel in patrum praecedentium factis siue dictis inuenissent, indefessa instantia sequerentur.

Deinde subiunxit diem sui obitus iam proxime instare. ‘Namque hospes,’ inquit, ‘ille amabilis, qui fratres nostros uisitare solebat, ad me quoque hodie uenire, meque de saeculo euocare dignatus est. Propter quod reuertentes ad ecclesiam dicite fratribus, ut et meum exitum Domino precibus commendent, et suum quoque exitum, cuius hora incerta est, uigiliis, orationibus, bonis operibus praeuenire meminerint.’ Cumque haec et huiusmodi plura loqueretur, atque illi percepta eius benedictione iam multum tristes exissent, rediit ipse solus, qui carmen caeleste audierat, et prosternens se in terram: ‘Obsecro,’ inquit, ‘pater; licet aliquid interrogare?’ ‘Interroga,’ inquit, ‘quod uis.’ At ille: ‘Obsecro,’

inquit, ‘ut dicas, quod erat canticum illud laetantium, quod audiui, uenientium de caelis super oratorium hoc, et post tempus redeuntium ad caelos?’ Respondet ille: ‘Si uocem carminis audisti, et caelestes superuenire coetus cognouisti, praecipio tibi in nomine Domini, ne hoc cuiquam ante meum obitum dicas. Re uera autem angelorum fuere spiritus, qui me ad caelestia, quae semper amabam, ac desiderabam, praemia uocare uenerunt, et post dies VII se redituros, ac me secum adducturos esse promiserunt.’ Quod quidem ita, ut dictum ei erat, opere completum est. Nam confestim langore

corporis tactus est, et hoc per dies ingrauescente, septimo, ut promissum ei fuerat, die, postquam obitum suum dominici corporis et sanguinis perceptione muniuit, soluta ab ergastulo corporis anima sancta, ducentibus, ut credi fas est, angelis comitibus aeterna gaudia petiuit. Non autem mirum, si diem mortis uel potius diem Domini laetus aspexit, quem semper, usquedum ueniret, sollicitus expectare curauit.

Namque inter plura continentiae, humilitatis, doctrinae, orationum, uoluntariae paupertatis, et ceterarum uirtutum merita, in tantum erat timori Domini subditus, in tantum nouissimorum suorum in omnibus operibus suis memor, ut, sicut mihi frater quidam de his, qui me in scripturis erudiebant, et erat in monasterio ac magisterio illius educatus, uocabulo Trumberct, referre solebat, si forte legente eo uel aliud quid agente, repente flatus uenti maior adsurgeret, continuo misericordiam Domini inuocaret, et eam generi humano propitiari rogaret. Si autem uiolentior aura insisteret, iam clauso codice procideret in faciem, atque obnixius orationi incumberet. At si procella fortior aut nimbus perurgeret, uel etiam corusci ac tonitrua terras et aera terrent, tunc ueniens ad ecclesiam sollicitus orationibus ac psalmis, donec serenitas aeris rediret, fixa mente uacaret. Cumque interrogaretur a suis, quare hoc faceret, respondebat: ‘Non legistis, quia “intonuit de caelo Dominus, et Altissimus dedit uocem suam; misit sagittas suas, et dissipauit eos, fulgora multiplicauit, et conturbauit eos?” Mouet enim aera Dominus, uentos excitat, iaculatur fulgora, de caelo intonat, ut terrigenas ad timendum se suscitet, ut corda eorum in memoriam futuri iudicii reuocet, ut superbiam eorum dissipet, et conturbet audaciam, reducto ad mentem tremendo illo tempore, quando ipse caelis ac terris ardentibus uenturus est in nubibus, in potestate magna et maiestate, ad iudicandos uiuos et mortuos.

Propter quod,’ inquit, ‘oportet nos admonitioni eius caelesti, debito cum timore et amore respondere; ut, quoties aere commoto manum quasi ad feriendum minitans exerit, nec adhuc tamen percutit, mox in ploremus eius misericordiam, et discussis penetralibus cordis nostri, atque expurgatis uitiorum ruderibus, solliciti, ne umquam percuti mereamur, agamus.’

Conuenit autem reuelationi et relationi praefati fratris de obitu huius antistitis etiam sermo reuerentissimi patris Ecgbercti, de quo supra diximus, qui dudum cum eodem Ceadda adolescente, et ipse adulescens in Hibernia monachicam in orationibus et continentia, et meditatione diuinarum scripturarum uitam sedulus agebat. Sed illo postmodum patriam reuerso, ipse peregrinus pro Domino usque ad finem uitae permansit. Cum ergo ueniret ad eum longo post tempore gratia uisitationis de Brittania uir sanctissimus et continentissimus, uocabulo Hygbald, qui erat abbas in prouincia Lindissi, et ut sanctos decebat, de uita priorum patrum sermonem facerent, atque hanc aemulari gauderent, interuenit mentio reuerentissimi antistitis Ceadda, dixitque Ecgberct: ‘Scio hominem in hac insula adhuc in carne manentem, qui, cum uir ille de mundo transiret, uidit animam Ceddi fratris ipsius cum

agmine angelorum descendere de caelo, et adsumta secum anima eius, ad caelestia regna redire.' Quod utrum de se an de alio aliquo diceret, nobis manet incertum, dum tamen hoc, quod tantus uir dixit, quia uerum sit, esse non possit incertum.

Obiit autem Ceadda sexto die Nonarum Martiarum, et sepultus est primo quidem iuxta ecclesiam sanctae Mariae; sed postmodum constructa ibidem ecclesia beatissimi apostolorum principis Petri, in eandem sunt eius ossa translata. In quo utroque loco, ad indicium uirtutis illius, solent crebra sanitatum miracula operari. Denique nuper freneticus quidam, dum per cuncta errando discurreret, deuenit ibi uespere, nescientibus siue non curantibus loci custodibus, et ibi tota nocte requiescens, mane sanato sensu egressus, mirantibus et gaudentibus cunctis, quid ibi sanitatis Domino largiente consequeretur, ostendit. Est autem locus idem sepulchri tumba lignea in modum domunculi facta coopertus, habente foramen in pariete, per quod solent hi, qui causa deuotionis illo adueniunt, manum suam inmittere, ac partem pulueris inde adsumere; quam cum in aquas miserint, atque has infirmantibus iumentis siue hominibus gustandas dederint, mox infirmitatis ablata molestia, cupitae sospitatis gaudia redibunt.

In cuius locum ordinauit Theodorus Uynfridum, uirum bonum ac modestum, qui, sicut predecessores eius, prouinciis Merciorum et Mediterraneorum Anglorum et Lindisfarorum episcopatus officio praeesset; in quibus cunctis Uulfheri, qui adhuc supererat, sceptrum regni tenebat. Erat autem Uynfrid de clero eius, cui ipse successerat, antistitis, et diaconatus officio sub eo non paucio tempore fungebatur.

Chap. III.

How the above-mentioned Ceadda was made Bishop of the province of Mercians. Of his life, death, and burial. [669 a.d.]

At that time, the province of the Mercians was governed by King Wulfhere, who, on the death of Jaruman, desired of Theodore that a bishop should be given to him and his people; but Theodore would not ordain a new one for them, but requested of King Oswy that Ceadda might be their bishop. He then lived in retirement at his monastery, which is at Laestingaeu, while Wilfrid administered the bishopric of York, and of all the Northumbrians, and likewise of the Picts, as far as King Oswy was able to extend his dominions. And, seeing that it was the custom of that most reverend prelate to go about the work of the Gospel everywhere on foot rather than on horseback, Theodore commanded him to ride whenever he had a long journey to undertake; and finding him very unwilling, in his zeal and love for his pious labour, he himself, with his own hands, lifted him on horseback; for he knew him to be a holy man, and therefore obliged him to ride wherever he had need to go. Ceadda having received the bishopric of the Mercians and of Lindsey,

took care to administer it with great perfection of life, according to the example of the ancient fathers. King Wulfhere also gave him land of the extent of fifty families, to build a monastery, at the place called Ad Barvae, or “At the Wood,” in the province of Lindsey, wherein traces of the monastic life instituted by him continue to this day.

He had his episcopal see in the place called Lyccidfelth, in which he also died, and was buried, and where the see of the succeeding bishops of that province continues to this day. He had built himself a retired habitation not far from the church, wherein he was wont to pray and read in private, with a few, it might be seven or eight of the brethren, as often as he had any spare time from the labour and ministry of the Word. When he had most gloriously governed the church in that province for two years and a half, the Divine Providence so ordaining, there came round a season like that of which Ecclesiastes says, “That there is a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;” for a plague fell upon them, sent from Heaven, which, by means of the death of the flesh, translated the living stones of the Church from their earthly places to the heavenly building. And when, after many of the Church of that most reverend prelate had been taken away out of the flesh, his hour also drew near wherein he was to pass out of this world to the Lord, it happened one day that he was in the aforesaid habitation with only one brother, called Owini, his other companions having upon some due occasion returned to the church. Now Owini was a monk of great merit, having forsaken the world with the sole desire of the heavenly reward; worthy in all respects to have the secrets of the Lord revealed to him in special wise, and worthy to have credit given by his hearers to what he said. For he had come with Queen Ethelthryth from the province of the East Angles, and was the chief of her thegns, and governor of her house. As the fervour of his faith increased, resolving to renounce the secular life, he did not go about it slothfully, but so entirely forsook the things of this world, that, quitting all that he had, clad in a plain garment, and carrying an axe and hatchet in his hand, he came to the monastery of the same most reverend father, which is called Laestingaeu. He said that he was not entering the monastery in order to live in idleness, as some do, but to labour; which he also confirmed by practice; for as he was less capable of studying the Scriptures, the more earnestly he applied himself to the labour of his hands. So then, forasmuch as he was reverent and devout, he was kept by the bishop in the aforesaid habitation with the brethren, and whilst they were engaged within in reading, he was without, doing such things as were necessary.

One day, when he was thus employed abroad, his companions having gone to the church, as I began to tell, and the bishop was alone reading or praying in the oratory of that place, on a sudden, as he afterwards said, he heard a sweet sound of singing and rejoicing descend from heaven to earth. This sound he said he first heard coming from the sky in the south-east, above the

winter sunrise, and that afterwards it drew near him gradually, till it came to the roof of the oratory where the bishop was, and entering therein, filled all the place and encompassed it about. He listened attentively to what he heard, and after about half an hour, perceived the same song of joy to ascend from the roof of the said oratory, and to return to heaven in the same way as it came, with unspeakable sweetness. When he had stood some time amazed, and earnestly considering in his mind what this might be, the bishop opened the window of the oratory, and making a sound with his hand, as he was often wont to do, bade anyone who might be without to come in to him. He went hastily in, and the bishop said to him, "Make haste to the church, and cause those seven brothers to come hither, and do you come with them." When they were come, he first admonished them to preserve the virtue of love and peace among themselves, and towards all the faithful; and with unwearied earnestness to follow the rules of monastic discipline, which they had either been taught by him, and had seen him observe, or had found in the words and actions of the former fathers. Then he added that the day of his death was at hand; for, said he, "that gracious guest, who was wont to visit our brethren, has vouchsafed also to come to me this day, and to call me out of this world. Return, therefore, to the church, and speak to the brethren, that in their prayers they commend my departure to the Lord, and that they be mindful to prepare for their own, the hour whereof is uncertain, by watching, and prayer, and good works."

When he had spoken thus much and more to the same end, and they, having received his blessing, had gone away in great sorrow, he who had heard the heavenly song returned alone, and prostrating himself on the ground, said, "I beseech you, father, may I be permitted to ask a question?"—"Ask what you will," answered the bishop. Then he said, "I beseech you to tell me what was that song which I heard as of a joyful company coming from heaven upon this oratory, and after some time returning to heaven?" The bishop answered: "If you heard the singing, and know of the coming of the heavenly company, I command you, in the Name of the Lord, that you tell it not to any before my death. But in truth they were angelic spirits, who came to call me to my heavenly reward, which I have always loved and longed after, and they promised that they would return seven days hence, and take me away with them." Which was indeed fulfilled, as had been said to him; for being presently seized with bodily infirmity, and the same daily increasing, on the seventh day, as had been promised to him, when he had prepared for death by receiving the Body and Blood of our Lord, his saintly soul being delivered from the prison of the body, led, as may justly be believed, by the attendant angels, he departed to the joys of Heaven.

It is no wonder that he joyfully beheld the day of his death, or rather the day of the Lord, the coming whereof he had always been mindful to await with earnest expectation. For with all his merits of continence, humility,

teaching, prayer, voluntary poverty, and other virtues, he was so filled with the fear of the Lord, so mindful of his latter end in all his actions, that, as I was wont to hear from one of the brothers who instructed me in the Scriptures, and who had been bred in his monastery, and under his direction, whose name was Trumbert, if it happened that there blew a sudden strong gust of wind, when he was reading or doing any other thing, he forthwith called upon the Lord for mercy, and begged that it might be granted to all mankind. If the wind grew stronger, he closed his book, and fell on his face, praying still more earnestly. But, if a violent storm of wind or rain came on, or if the earth and air were filled with the terror of thunder and lightning, he would go to the church, and anxiously devote himself with all his heart to prayers and psalms till the weather became calm. Being asked by his brethren why he did so, he answered, "Have not you read— 'The Lord also thundered in the heavens, and the Highest gave his voice. Yea, he sent out his arrows and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them.' For the Lord moves the air, raises the winds, hurls lightning, and thunders from heaven, to rouse the inhabitants of the earth to fear him; to put them in mind of judgement to come; to dispel their pride, and confound their boldness, by recalling to their thoughts that dread time, when the heavens and the earth being on fire, He will come in the clouds, with great power and majesty, to judge the quick and the dead. Wherefore," said he, "it behoves us to respond to His heavenly admonition with due fear and love; that, as often as the air is moved and He puts forth His hand threatening to strike, but does not yet let it fall, we may immediately implore His mercy; and searching the recesses of our hearts, and casting out the dregs of our sins, we may carefully so act that we may never deserve to be struck down."

With this revelation and narrative of the aforesaid brother, concerning the death of this prelate, agrees the account of the most reverend Father Egbert, above spoken of, who long and zealously led a monastic life with the same Ceadda, when both were youths, in Ireland, in prayer and self-denial and meditation on the Holy Scriptures. But whereas Ceadda afterwards returned into his own country, Egbert continued to live abroad for the Lord's sake till the end of his life. A long time after, Hygbald, a man of great holiness and continence, who was an abbot in the province of Lindsey, came from Britain to visit him, and whilst, as became holy men, they were discoursing of the life of the former fathers, and rejoicing to imitate the same, mention was made of the most reverend prelate, Ceadda; whereupon Egbert said, "I know a man in this island, still in the flesh, who, when Ceadda passed away from this world, saw the soul of his brother Cedd, with a company of angels, descending from heaven, who, having taken Ceadda's soul along with them, returned again to the heavenly kingdom." Whether he said this of himself, or some other, we do not certainly know; but because it was said by so great a man, there can be no doubt of the truth thereof.

Ceadda died on the 2nd of March, and was first buried by St. Mary's Church, but afterwards, when the church of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, Peter, was built in the same place, his bones were translated into it. In both which places, as a testimony of his virtue, frequent miracles of healing are wont to be wrought. And of late, a certain man that had a frenzy, wandering about everywhere, arrived there in the evening, unperceived or disregarded by the keepers of the place, and having rested there the whole of the night, came forth in his right mind the next morning, to the surprise and joy of all, and told what a cure had been wrought on him through the goodness of God. The place of the sepulchre is a wooden monument, made like a little house, covered, having a hole in the wall, through which those that go thither for devotion are wont to put in their hand and take out some of the dust. This they put into water and give to sick cattle or men to drink, whereupon they are presently eased of their infirmity, and restored to their desired health.

In his place, Theodore ordained Wynfrid, a man of good and sober life, to preside, like his predecessors, over the bishoprics of the Mercians, the Midland Angles, and Lindsey, of all which, Wulfhere, who was still living, was king. Wynfrid was one of the clergy of the prelate he succeeded, and had for no small time filled the office of deacon under him.

CHAP. 4

Interea Colmanus, qui de Scottia erat episcopus, relinquens Britanniam, tulit secum omnes, quos in Lindisfarnensium insula congregauerat Scottos; sed et de gente Anglorum uiros circiter XXX, qui utrique monachicae conuersationis erant studiis inbuti. Et relictis in ecclesia sua fratribus aliquot, primo uenit ad insulam Hii, unde erat ad praedicandum uerbum Anglorum genti destinatus.

Deinde secessit ad insulam quandam paruam, quae ad occidentalem plagam ab Hibernia procul secreta, sermone Scottico Inisboufinde, id est insula uitulae albae, nuncupatur. In hanc ergo perueniens, construxit monasterium, et monachos inibi, quos de utraque natione collectos adduxerat, collocauit. Qui cum inuicem concordare non possent, eo quod Scotti tempore aestatis, quo fruges erant colligendae, relicto monasterio per nota sibi loca dispersi uagarentur, at uero hieme succedente redirent, et his, quae Angli praeparauerant, communiter uti desiderarent; quaesiuit Colmanus huic dissensioni remedium, et circuiens omnia prope uel longe, inuenit locum in Hibernia insula aptum monasterio construendo, qui lingua Scottorum Magaco nominatur; emitque partem eius non grandem, ad constituendum ibi monasterium, a comite, ad cuius possessionem pertinebat; ea condicione addita, ut pro ipso etiam, qui eis locum commodaret, consistentes ibi monachi Domino preces offerrent. Et constructo statim monasterio, iuuante etiam comite ac uicinis omnibus, Anglos ibidem locauit, relictis in praefata insula Scottis.

Quod uidelicet monasterium usque hodie ab Anglis tenetur incolis.

Ipsam namque est, quod nunc grande de modico effectum, Muigaco consueue uocatur, et conuersis iamdudum ad meliora instituta omnibus, egregium examen continet monachorum, qui de prouincia Anglorum ibidem collecti, ad exemplum uenerabilium patrum sub regula et abbate canonico in magna continentia et sinceritate proprio labore manuum uiuant.

Chap. IV.

How Bishop Colman, having left Britain, built two monasteries in the country of the Scots; the one for the Scots, the other for the English whom he had taken along with him. [667 a.d.]

In the meantime, Colman, the Scottish bishop, departing from Britain, took along with him all the Scots whom he had gathered about him in the isle of Lindisfarne, and also about thirty of the English nation, for both these companies had been trained in duties of the monastic life; and leaving some brothers in his church, he went first to the isle of Hii, whence he had been sent to preach the Word of God to the English nation. Afterwards he retired to a

small island, which is to the west of Ireland, and at some distance from it, called in the language of the Scots, Inisboufinde, the Island of the White Heifer. Arriving there, he built a monastery, and placed in it the monks he had brought of both nations. But they could not agree among themselves, by reason that the Scots, in the summer season, when the harvest was to be brought in, leaving the monastery, wandered about through places known to them; but returned again the next winter, and desired to use in common what the English had provided. Colman sought to put an end to this dissension, and travelling about far and near, he found a place in the island of Ireland fitted to be the site of a monastery, which, in the language of the Scots, is called Mageo. He bought a small part of it of the chief to whom it belonged, to build his monastery thereon; upon condition, that the monks dwelling there should pray to the Lord for him who let them have the place. Then at once building a monastery, with the assistance of the chief and all the neighbouring people, he placed the English there, leaving the Scots in the aforesaid island. This monastery is to this day occupied by English inhabitants; being the same that, grown from a small beginning to be very large, is commonly called Muigeo; and as all have long since been brought to adopt better customs, it contains a notable society of monks, who are gathered there from the province of the English, and live by the labour of their own hands, after the example of the venerable fathers, under a rule and a canonical abbot, in much continence and singleness of life.

CHAP. 5

Anno dominicae incarnationis DCLXXmo, qui est annus secundus ex quo Britanniam uenit Theodorus, Osuii rex Nordanhymbrorum pressus est infirmitate, qua et mortuus est anno aetatis suae LVIIIo. Qui in tantum eo tempore tenebatur amore Romanae et apostolicae institutionis, ut, si ab infirmitate saluaretur, etiam Romam uenire, ibique ad loca sancta uitam finire disponderet, Uilfridumque episcopum ducem sibi itineris fieri, promissa non parua pecuniarum donatione, rogaret. Qui defunctus die XV Kalendarum Martiarum Ecgfridum filium regni heredem reliquit; cuius anno regni IIIo, Theodorus cogit concilium episcoporum, una cum eis, qui canonica patrum statuta et diligerent, et nossent, magistris ecclesiae pluribus. Quibus pariter congregatis, diligenter ea, quae unitati pacis ecclesiasticae congruerent, eo quo pontificem decebat, animo, coepit obseruanda docere. Cuius synodicae actionis huiusmodi textus est:

In nomine Domini Dei et Saluatoris nostri Iesu Christi, regnante in perpetuum ac gubernante suam ecclesiam eodem Domino Iesu Christo, placuit conuenire nos iuxta morem canonum uenerabilium, tractaturos de necessariis ecclesiae negotiis. Conuenimus autem die XXo IIIo mensis Septembris, indictione prima, in loco, qui dicitur Herutford;

ego quidem Theodorus, quamuis indignus, ab apostolica sede destinatus Doruuernensis ecclesiae episcopus, et consacerdos ac frater noster, reuerentissimus Bisi, Orientalium Anglorum episcopus;

quibus etiam frater et consacerdos noster Uilfrid, Nordanhymbrorum gentis episcopus, per proprios legatarios adfuit. Adfuerunt et fratres ac consacerdotes nostri, Putta, episcopus castelli Cantuariorum, quod dicitur HrofescÅ”stir, Leutherius, episcopus Occidentalium Saxonum, Uynfrid, episcopus prouinciae Merciorum.

Cumque in unum conuenientes iuxta ordinem quique suum resedissemus: ‘Rogo,’ inquam, ‘dilectissimi fratres, propter timorem et amorem Redemptoris nostri, ut in commune omnes pro nostra fide tractemus; ut, quaeque decreta ac definita sunt a sanctis ac probabilibus patribus, incorrupte ab omnibus nobis seruentur.’ Haec et alia quamplura, quae ad caritatem pertinebant, unitatemque ecclesiae conseruandam, proscutus sum. Cumque explessem praelocutionem, interrogaui unumquemque eorum per ordinem, si consentirent ea, quae a patribus canonice sunt antiquitus decreta, custodire. Ad quod omnes consacerdotes nostri respondentes dixerunt: ‘Optime omnibus placet, quaeque definierunt sanctorum canones patrum, nos quoque omnes alacri animo libentissime seruare.’

Quibus statim protuli eundem librum canonum, et ex eodem libro X capitula, quae per loca notaueram, quia maxime nobis necessaria sciebam,

illis coram ostendi, et, ut haec diligentius ab omnibus susciperentur, rogauit.

Primum capitulum: ‘Ut sanctum diem paschae in commune omnes seruemus dominica post XIIIam lunam mensis primi.’

Secundum: ‘Ut nullus episcoporum parrochiam alterius inuadat, sed contentus sit gubernatione creditae sibi plebis.’

III: ‘Ut, quaeque monasteria Deo consecrata sunt, nulli episcoporum liceat ea in aliquo inquietare, nec quicquam de eorum rebus uiolenter abstrahere.’

IIII: ‘Ut ipsi monachi non migrent de loco ad locum, hoc est de monasterio ad monasterium, nisi per dimissionem proprii abbatis; sed in ea permaneant oboedientia, quam tempore suae conuersionis promiserunt.’

V: ‘Ut nullus clericorum relinquens proprium episcopum, passim quolibet discurrat, neque alicubi ueniens absque commendaticii litteris sui praesulis suscipiatur. Quod si semel susceptus noluerit inuitatis redire, et susceptor, et is, qui susceptus est, excommunicationi subiacebit.’

VI: ‘Ut episcopi atque clerici peregrini contenti sint hospitalitatis munere oblato; nullique eorum liceat ullum officium sacerdotale, absque permissu episcopi, in cuius parrochia esse cognoscitur, agere.’

VII: ‘Ut bis in anno synodus congregetur. Sed quia diuersae causae impediunt, placuit omnibus in commune, ut Kalendis Augustis in loco, qui appellatur Clofeshoch, semel in anno congregemur.’

VIII: ‘Ut nullus episcoporum se praeferat alteri per ambitionem; sed omnes agnoscant tempus et ordinem consecrationis suae.’

VIII capitulum in commune tractatum est: ‘Ut plures episcopi crescente numero fidelium augerentur’; sed de hac re ad praesens siluimus.

X capitulum pro coniugiis: ‘Ut nulli liceat nisi legitimum habere conubium. Nullus incestum faciat, nullus coniugem propriam, nisi, ut sanctum euangelium docet, fornicationis causa, relinquat. Quod si quisquam propriam expulerit coniugem legitimo sibi matrimonio coniunctam, si Christianus esse recte uoluerit, nulli alteri copuletur; sed ita permaneat, aut propriae reconcilietur coniugi.’

His itaque capitulis in commune tractatis ac definitis, ut nullum deinceps ab aliquo nostrum oriatur contentionis scandalum, aut alia pro aliis diuulgarentur, placuit, ut, quaeque definita sunt, unusquisque nostrum manus propriae subscriptione confirmaret. Quam sententiam definitionis nostrae Titillo notario scribendam dictaui.

Actum in mense et indictione supra scripta. Quisquis igitur contra hanc sententiam, iuxta decreta canonum, nostra etiam consensione ac subscriptione manus nostrae confirmatam, quoquo modo uenire, eamque infringere temptauerit, nouerit se ab omni officio sacerdotali et nostra societate separatam. Diuina nos gratia in unitate sanctae suae ecclesiae uiuentes custodiat

incolumes.

Facta est autem haec synodus anno ab incarnatione Domini DCLXX tertio, quo anno rex Cantuariorum Egberct mense Iulio obierat, succedente in regnum fratre Hlothere, quod ipse annos XI et menses VII tenuit. Bisi autem episcopus Orientalium Anglorum, qui in praefata synodo fuisse perhibetur, ipse erat successor Bonifatii, cuius supra meminimus, uir multae sanctitatis et religionis. Nam Bonifatio post X et VII episcopatus sui annos defuncto, episcopus ipse pro eo, Theodoro ordinante, factus est. Quo adhuc superstite, sed grauissima infirmitate ab administrando episcopatu prohibito, duo sunt pro illo, Aecci et Baduini, electi et consecrati episcopi;

ex quo usque hodie prouincia illa duos habere solet episcopos.

Chap. V.

Of the death of the kings Oswy and Egbert, and of the synod held at the place Herutford, in which Archbishop Theodore presided. [670-673 a.d.]

In the year of our Lord 670, being the second year after Theodore arrived in England, Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, fell sick, and died, in the fifty-eighth year of his age. He at that time bore so great affection to the Roman Apostolic usages, that he had designed, if he recovered from his sickness, to go to Rome, and there to end his days at the holy places, having asked Bishop Wilfrid, with a promise of no small gift of money, to conduct him on his journey. He died on the 15th of February, leaving his son Egfrid his successor in the kingdom. In the third year of his reign, Theodore assembled a council of bishops, along with many other teachers of the church, who loved and were acquainted with the canonical statutes of the fathers. When they were met together, he began, in the spirit which became a bishop, to enjoin the observance of such things as were in accordance with the unity and the peace of the Church. The purport of the proceedings of this synod is as follows: —

“In the name of our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ, Who reigns for ever and governs His Church, it was thought meet that we should assemble, according to the custom prescribed in the venerable canons, to treat about the necessary affairs of the Church. We met on the 24th day of September, the first indiction, at the place which is called Herutford: I, Theodore, albeit unworthy, appointed by the Apostolic see bishop of the church of Canterbury; our fellow priest and brother, the most reverend Bisi, bishop of the East Angles; and with us also our brother and fellow priest, Wilfrid, bishop of the nation of the Northumbrians, represented by his proxies. There were present also our brothers and fellow priests, Putta, bishop of the Kentish castle, called Rochester; Leutherius, bishop of the West Saxons, and Wynfrid, bishop of the province of the Mercians. When we were all met together, and had sat down in order, I said, ‘I beseech you, most dear brothers, for the fear and love of our Redeemer, that we may all treat in common on behalf of our faith; to the end

that whatsoever has been decreed and defined by holy and approved fathers, may be inviolably observed by all of us.' This and much more I spoke tending to charity and the preservation of the unity of the Church; and when I had ended my preface, I asked every one of them in order, whether they consented to observe the things that had been of old canonically decreed by the fathers? To which all our fellow priests answered, 'Most assuredly we are all resolved to observe willingly and heartily whatsoever is laid down in the canons of the holy fathers.' Then forthwith I produced the said book of canons, and in the presence of them all showed ten articles in the same, which I had marked in several places, because I knew them to be of the most importance to us, and entreated that these might be most particularly received by them all.

"Article I. That we all in common keep the holy day of Easter on the Sunday after the fourteenth moon of the first month.

"II. That no bishop intrude into the diocese of another, but be satisfied with the government of the people committed to him.

"III. That it shall not be lawful for any bishop to disturb in any matter monasteries dedicated to God, nor to take away forcibly any part of their property.

"IV. That the monks themselves do not move from one place to another, that is, from monastery to monastery, unless with the consent of their own abbot; but that they continue in the obedience which they promised at the time of their conversion.

"V. That no clerk, forsaking his own bishop, shall wander about, or be anywhere received without commendatory letters from his diocesan. But if he shall be once received, and will not return when summoned, both the receiver, and he that is received shall be under excommunication.

"VI. That bishops and clergy, when travelling, shall be content with the hospitality that is afforded them; and that it be not lawful for any one of them to exercise any priestly function without leave of the bishop in whose diocese he is known to be.

"VII. That a synod be assembled twice a year; but on account of divers hindrances, it was approved by all, that we should meet once a year, on the 1st of August, at the place called Clofeshoch.

"VIII. That no bishop, through ambition, shall set himself above another; but that they shall all observe the time and order of their consecration.

"IX. The ninth Article was discussed in common, to the effect that more bishops should be made, as the number of the faithful increased; but this matter for the present was passed over.

"X. Of marriages; that nothing be allowed but lawful wedlock; that none commit incest; no man leave his own wife, except it be, as the holy Gospel teaches, for fornication. And if any man shall put away his own wife, lawfully

joined to him in matrimony, that he take no other, if he wishes to be a true Christian, but continue as he is, or else be reconciled to his own wife.

“These articles being thus discussed and defined in common, to the end, that for the future, no stumbling-block of contention might arise from any one of us, or that things be falsely set forth, it was thought fit that every one of us should, by the subscription of his own hand, confirm all the particulars so defined. Which judgement, as defined by us, I dictated to be written by Titillus our notary. Given in the month and indiction aforesaid. Whosoever, therefore, shall attempt in any way to oppose or infringe this decision, confirmed by our consent, and by the subscription of our hands, according to the decree of the canons, must know, that he is excluded from all sacerdotal functions, and from our fellowship. May the Grace of God keep us in safety, living in the unity of His Holy Church.”

This synod was held in the year of our Lord 673. In which year Egbert, king of Kent, died in the month of July; his brother Hlothere succeeded him on the throne, which he held eleven years and seven months. Bisi, the bishop of the East Angles, who is said to have been in the aforesaid synod, a man of great saintliness and piety, was successor to Boniface, before spoken of; for when Boniface died, after having been bishop seventeen years, he was ordained by Theodore and made bishop in his place. Whilst he was still alive, but hindered by grievous infirmity from administering his episcopal functions, two bishops, Aecci and Badwin, were elected and consecrated in his place; from which time to the present, that province has had two bishops.

CHAP. 6

Non multo post haec elapso tempore, offensus a Uynfrido Merciorum episcopo per meritum cuiusdam inoboedientiae, Theodorus archiepiscopus deposuit eum de episcopatu post annos accepti episcopatus non multos; et in loco eius ordinauit episcopum Sexuulfum, qui erat constructor et abbas monasterii, quod dicitur Medeshamsted, in regione Gyruiorum. Depositus uero Uynfrid rediit ad monasterium suum, quod dicitur Adbaruae, ibique in optima uitam conuersatione finiuit.

Tum etiam Orientalibus Saxonibus, quibus eo tempore praefuerunt Sebbi et Sigheri, quorum supra meminimus, Earconwaldum constituit episcopum in ciuitate Lundonia; cuius uidelicet uiri, et in episcopatu, et ante episcopatum, uita et conuersatio fertur fuisse sanctissima, sicut etiam nunc caelestium signa uirtutum indicio sunt. Etenim usque hodie feretrum eius caballarium, quo infirmus uehi solebat, seruatum a discipulis eius, multos febricitantes, uel alio quolibet incommodo fessos, sanare non desistit. Non solum autem subpositi eidem feretro, uel adpositi curantur egroti, sed et astulae de illo abscissae, atque ad infirmos adlatae citam illis solent adferre medellam.

Hic sane priusquam episcopus factus esset, duo praeclara monasteria, unum sibi, alterum sorori suae Aedilburgae construxerat, quod utrumque regularibus disciplinis optime instituerat; sibi quidem in regione Sudergeona, iuxta fluuium Tamensem, in loco, qui uocatur Cerotaesei, id est Ceroti insula; sorori autem in Orientalium Saxonum prouincia, in loco, qui nuncupatur In Berecingum, in quo ipsa Deo deuotarum mater ac nutrix posset existere feminarum. Quae suscepto monasterii regimine, condignam se in omnibus episcopo fratre, et ipsa recte uiuendo, et subiectis regulariter ac pie consulendo praeuit; ut etiam caelestia indicio fuere miracula.

Chap. VI.

How Wynfrid being deposed, Sexwulf received his bishopric, and Earconwald was made bishop of the East Saxons. [675 a.d.]

Not long after these events, Theodore, the archbishop, taking offence at some act of disobedience of Wynfrid, bishop of the Mercians, deposed him from his bishopric when he had held it but a few years, and in his place ordained Sexwulf bishop, who was founder and abbot of the monastery which is called Medeshamstead, in the country of the Gyrwas. Wynfrid, thus deposed, returned to his monastery which is called Ad Barvae, and there ended his life in holy conversation.

Theodore then also appointed Earconwald, bishop of the East Saxons, in the city of London, over whom at that time reigned Sebbi and Sighere, of whom mention has been made above. This Earconwald's life and

conversation, as well when he was bishop as before that time, is said to have been most holy, as is even now testified by heavenly miracles; for to this day, his horse-litter, in which he was wont to be carried when sick, is kept by his disciples, and continues to cure many of fevers and other ailments; and not only sick persons who are laid under that litter, or close by it, are cured; but the very splinters cut from it, when carried to the sick, are wont immediately to bring healing to them.

This man, before he was made bishop, had built two famous monasteries, the one for himself, and the other for his sister Ethelburg, and established them both in regular discipline of the best kind. That for himself was in the district of Sudergeona, by the river Thames, at a place called Cerotaesei, that is, the Island of Cerot; that for his sister in the province of the East Saxons, at a place called In Berecingum, wherein she might be a mother and nurse of women devoted to God. Being put into the government of that monastery, she showed herself in all respects worthy of her brother the bishop, by her own holy life and by her regular and pious care of those under her rule, as was also manifested by heavenly miracles.

CHAP. 7

In hoc etenim monasterio plura uirtutum sunt signa patrata, quae et ad memoriam aedificationemque sequentium ab his, qui nouere, descripta habentur a multis; e quibus et nos aliqua historiae nostrae ecclesiasticae inserere curauimus. Cum tempestas saepe dictae cladis late cuncta depopulans, etiam partem monasterii huius illam, qua uiri tenebantur, inuasisset, et passim cotidie raperentur ad Dominum; sollicita mater congregationis, qua hora etiam eam monasterii partem, qua ancillarum Dei caterua a uirorum erat secreta contubernio, eadem plaga tangeret, crebrius in conuentu sororum perquirere coepit, quo loci in monasterio corpora sua poni, et cymiterium fieri uellent, cum eas eodem, quo ceteros exterminio raptari e mundo contingeret. Cumque nihil certi responsi, tametsi saepius inquirens, a sororibus accepisset, accepit ipsa cum omnibus certissimum supernae prouisionis responsum. Cum enim nocte quadam, expletis matutinae laudis psalmodiis, egressae de oratorio famulae Christi, ad sepulchra fratrum, qui eas ex hac luce praecesserant, solitas Domino laudes decantarent, ecce subito lux emissa caelitus, ueluti linteam magnum, uenit super omnes, tantoque eas stupore perculit, ut etiam canticum, quod canebant, tremefactae intermitterent. Ipse autem splendor emissae lucis, in cuius conparatione sol meridianus uideri posset obscurus, non multo post illo eleuatus de loco, in meridianum monasterii, hoc est ad occidentem oratorii, secessit, ibique aliquandiu remoratus, et ea loca operiens, sic uidentibus cunctis ad caeli se alta subduxit; ut nulli esset dubium, quin ipsa lux, quae animas famularum Christi esset ductura uel susceptura in caelis, etiam corporibus earum locum, in quo requietura, et diem resurrectionis essent expectatura, monstraret. Cuius radius lucis tantus extitit, ut quidam de fratribus senior, qui ipsa hora in oratorio eorum cum alio iuniore positus fuerat, referret mane, quod ingressi per rimas ostiorum uel fenestrarum radii lucis, omnem diurni luminis uiderentur superare fulgorem.

Chap. VII.

How it was indicated by a light from heaven where the bodies of the nuns should be buried in the monastery of Berecingum. [675 a.d. ?]

In this monastery many miracles were wrought, accounts of which have been committed to writing by those who were acquainted with them, that their memory might be preserved, and succeeding generations edified, and these are in the possession of many persons; some of them we also have taken pains to include in our History of the Church. At the time of the pestilence, already often mentioned, which ravaged all the country far and wide, it had also seized on that part of this monastery where the men abode, and they were daily hurried away to the Lord. The careful mother of the community began

often to inquire of the sisters, when they were gathered together; in what part of the monastery they desired to be buried and a cemetery to be made, when the same affliction should fall upon that part of the monastery in which the handmaids of the Lord dwelt together apart from the men, and they should be snatched away out of this world by the same destruction as the rest. Receiving no certain answer from the sisters, though she often questioned them, she and all of them received a most certain answer from the Divine Providence. For one night, after matins had been sung, and those handmaids of Christ had gone out of their chapel to the tombs of the brothers who had departed this life before them, and were singing the customary songs of praise to the Lord, on a sudden a light from heaven, like a great sheet, came down upon them all, and struck them with such amazement, that, in consternation, they even left off singing their hymn. But that resplendent light, in comparison wherewith the sun at noon-day might seem dark, soon after, rising from that place, removed to the south side of the monastery, that is, to the westward of the chapel, and having continued there some time, and rested upon those parts, in the sight of them all withdrew itself again to heaven, leaving no doubt in the minds of all, but that the same light, which was to lead or to receive the souls of those handmaids of Christ into Heaven, also showed the place in which their bodies were to rest and await the day of the resurrection. The radiance of this light was so great, that one of the older brethren, who at the same time was in their chapel with another younger than himself, related in the morning, that the rays of light which came in at the crannies of the doors and windows, seemed to exceed the utmost brightness of daylight.

CHAP. 8

Erat in eodem monasterio puer trium circiter non amplius annorum, Aesica nomine, qui propter infantilem adhuc aetatem in uirginum Deo dedicatarum solebat cella nutriri, ibique meditari. Hic praefata pestilentia tactus, ubi ad extrema peruenit, clamauit tertio unam de consecratis Christo uirginibus, proprio eam nomine quasi praesentem alloquens, ‘Eadgyd, Eadgyd, Eadgyd’; et sic terminans temporalem uitam, intrauit aeternam. At uirgo illa, quam moriens uocabat, mox in loco, quo erat, eadem adtacta infirmitate, ipso, quo uocitata est die de hac luce subtracta, et illum, qui se uocauit, ad regnum caeleste secuta est.

Item quaedam ex eisdem ancellis Dei, cum praefato tacta morbo, atque ad extrema esset perducta, coepit subito circa mediam noctem clamare his, quae sibi ministrabant, petens, ut lucernam, quae inibi accensa erat, extinguerent. Quod cum frequenti uoce repeteret, nec tamen ei aliquis obtemperaret, ad extremum intulit: ‘Scio, quod me haec insana mente loqui arbitramini; sed iam nunc non ita esse cognoscite; nam uere dico uobis, quia domum hanc tanta luce inpletam esse perspicio, ut uestra illa lucerna mihi omnimodis esse uideatur obscura.’ Et cum ne adhuc quidem talia loquenti quisquam responderet, uel adsensum praeberet, iterum dixit: ‘Accendite ergo lucernam illam, quamdiu uultis; attamen scitote, quia non est mea;

nam mea lux, incipiente aurora, mihi aduentura est.’ Coepitque narrare, quia apparuerit sibi quidam uir Dei, qui eodem anno fuerat defunctus, dicens, quod adueniente diluculo perennem esset exitura ad lucem. Cuius ueritas uisionis cita circa exortum diei puellae morte probata est.

Chap. VIII.

How a little boy, dying in the same monastery, called upon a virgin that was to follow him; and how another nun, at the point of leaving her body, saw some small part of the future glory. [675 a.d.?]

There was, in the same monastery, a boy, not above three years old, called Aesica; who, by reason of his tender age, was being brought up among the virgins dedicated to God, there to learn his lessons. This child being seized by the aforesaid pestilence, when his last hour was come, called three times upon one of the virgins consecrated to Christ, speaking to her by her own name, as if she had been present, Eadgyth! Eadgyth! Eadgyth! and thus ending his temporal life, entered into that which is eternal. The virgin, to whom he called, as he was dying, was immediately seized, where she was, with the same sickness, and departing this life the same day on which she had been summoned, followed him that called her into the heavenly kingdom.

Likewise, one of the same handmaids of God, being smitten with the same

disease, and reduced to the last extremity, began on a sudden, about midnight, to cry out to them that ministered to her, desiring they would put out the lamp that was lighted there. And, when she had done this many times, and yet no one did her will, at last she said, "I know that you think I am raving, when I say this, but be assured that it is not so; for I tell you truly, that I see this house filled with so great a light, that that lamp of yours seems to me to be altogether dark." And when still no one replied to what she said, or did her bidding, she added, "Burn your lamp, then, as long as you will; but know, that it is not my light, for my light will come to me at the dawn of day." Then she began to tell, that a certain man of God, who had died that same year, had appeared to her, telling her that at the break of day she should depart to the eternal light. The truth of which vision was speedily proved by the maiden's death as soon as the day appeared.

CHAP. 9

Cum autem et ipsa mater pia Deo deuotae congregationis Aedilburga esset rapienda de mundo, apparuit uisio miranda cuidam de sororibus, cui nomen erat Torctgyd, quae multis iam annis in eodem monasterio commorata, et ipsa semper in omni humilitate ac sinceritate Deo seruire satagebat, et adiutrix disciplinae regularis eidem matri existere, minores docendo uel castigando curabat. Cuius ut uirtus, iuxta apostolum, in infirmitate perficeretur, tacta est repente grauissimo corporis morbo, et per annos VIII pia Redemptoris nostri prouisione multum fatigata; uidelicet ut, quicquid in ea uitii sordidantis inter uirtutes per ignorantiam uel incuriam resedisset, totum hoc caminus diutinae tribulationis excoqueret. Haec ergo quadam nocte incipiente crepusculo, egressa de cubiculo, quo manebat, uidit manifeste quasi corpus hominis, quod esset sole clarius, sindone inuolutum in sublime ferri, elatum uidelicet de domo, in qua sorores pausare solebant. Cumque diligentius intueretur, quo trahente leuaretur sursum haec, quam contemplabatur species corporis gloriosi, uidit, quasi funibus auro clarioribus in superna tolleretur, donec caelis patentibus introducta, amplius ab illa uideri non potuit. Nec dubium remansit cogitanti de uisione, quin aliquis de illa congregatione citius esset moriturus, cuius anima per bona, quae fecisset, opera, quasi per funes aureos leuanda esset ad caelos; quod re uera ita contigit. Nam non multis interpositis diebus, Deo dilecta mater congregationis ipsius, ergastulo carnis educta est; cuius talem fuisse constat uitam, ut nemo, qui eam nouerit, dubitare debeat, quin ei exeunti de hac uita caelestis patriae patuerit ingressus.

In eodem quoque monasterio quaedam erat femina sanctimonialis, et ad saeculi huius dignitatem nobilis, et in amore futuri saeculi nobilior; quae ita multis iam annis omni corporis fuerat officio destituta, ut ne unum quidem mouere ipsa membrum ualeret. Haec ubi corpus abbatisae uenerabilis in ecclesiam delatum, donec sepulturae daretur, cognouit, postulauit se illo adferri, et in modum orantium ad illud adclinari. Quod dum fieret, quasi uiuentem adlocuta, rogauit, ut apud misericordiam pii Conditoris inpetraret, se a tantis tamque diutinis cruciatibus absolui. Nec multo tardius exaudita est; nam post dies XII et ipsa educta ex carne temporales afflictiones aeterna mercede mutauit.

Cum uero praefata Christi famula Torctgyd tres adhuc annos post obitum dominae in hac uita teneretur, in tantum ea, quam praediximus, infirmitate decocta est, ut uix ossibus hereret; ad ultimum, cum tempus iam resolutionis eius instaret, non solum membrorum ceterorum, sed et linguae motu caruit. Quod dum tribus diebus et totidem noctibus ageretur, subito uisione spiritali recreata, os et oculos aperuit; aspectansque in caelum, sic ad eam, quam intuebatur, uisionem coepit loqui: ‘Gratus mihi est multum aduentus tuus, et bene uenisti.’ Et hoc dicto parumper reticuit, quasi responsum eius, quem uidebat et cui loquebatur, expectans.

Rursumque, quasi leuiter indignata, subiunxit: 'Nequaquam hoc laeta ferre queo.' Rursumque modicum silens, tertio dixit: 'Si nullatenus hodie fieri potest, obsecro, ne sit longum spatium in medio.' Dixit, et, sicut antea, parum silens, ita sermonem concludit: 'Si omnimodis ita definitum est, neque hanc sententiam licet inmutari, obsecro, ne amplius quam haec solummodo proxima nox intersit.' Quibus dictis, interrogata a circumsedentibus, cum quo loqueretur: 'Cum carissima,'

inquit, 'mea matre Aedilburge.' Ex quo intellexere, quod ipsa ei tempus suae transmigrationis proximum nuntiare uenisset. Nam et ita, ut rogabat, transacta una die et nocte, soluta carnis simul et infirmitatis uinculis ad aeternae gaudia salutis intrauit.

Chap. IX.

Of the signs which were shown from Heaven when the mother of that community departed this life. [675 a.d.?]

Now when Ethelburg herself, the pious mother of that community devoted to God, was about to be taken out of this world, a wonderful vision appeared to one of the sisters, called Tortgyth; who, having lived many years in that monastery, always endeavoured, in all humility and sincerity, to serve God herself, and to help the mother to maintain regular discipline, by instructing and reproving the younger ones. Now, in order that her virtue might, according to the Apostle, be made perfect in weakness, she was suddenly seized with a most grievous bodily disease, under which, through the merciful providence of our Redeemer, she was sorely tried for the space of nine years; to the end, that whatever stain of evil remained amidst her virtues, either through ignorance or neglect, might all be purified in the furnace of long tribulation. This woman, going out of the chamber where she abode one night, at dusk, plainly saw as it were a human body, which was brighter than the sun, wrapped in fine linen, and lifted up on high, being taken out of the house in which the sisters used to sleep. Then looking earnestly to see what it was that drew up that appearance of the glorious body which she beheld, she perceived that it was raised on high as it were by cords brighter than gold, until, entering into the open heavens, it could no longer be seen by her. Reflecting on this vision, she made no doubt that some one of the community would soon die, and her soul be lifted up to heaven by the good works which she had wrought, as it were by golden cords. And so in truth it befell; for a few days after, the beloved of God, Ethelburg, mother of that community, was delivered out of the prison of the flesh; and her life is proved to have been such that no one who knew her ought to doubt that an entrance into the heavenly country was open to her, when she departed from this life.

There was also, in the same monastery, a certain nun, of noble origin in this world, and still nobler in the love of the world to come; who had, for

many years, been so disabled in all her body, that she could not move a single limb. When she heard that the body of the venerable abbess had been carried into the church, till it should be buried, she desired to be carried thither, and to be placed bending towards it, after the manner of one praying; which being done, she spoke to her as if she had been living, and entreated her that she would obtain of the mercy of our pitiful Creator, that she might be delivered from such great and long-continued pains; nor was it long before her prayer was heard: for being delivered from the flesh twelve days after, she exchanged her temporal afflictions for an eternal reward.

For three years after the death of her Superior, the aforesaid handmaid of Christ, Tortgyth, was detained in this life and was so far spent with the sickness before mentioned, that her bones scarce held together. At last, when the time of her release was at hand, she not only lost the use of her other limbs, but also of her tongue; in which state having continued three days and as many nights, she was, on a sudden, restored by a spiritual vision, and opened her lips and eyes, and looking up to heaven, began thus to speak to the vision which she saw: "Very acceptable to me is thy coming, and thou art welcome!" Having so said, she was silent awhile, as it were, waiting for the answer of him whom she saw and to whom she spoke; then, as if somewhat displeased, she said, "I can in no wise gladly suffer this;" then pausing awhile, she said again, "If it can by no means be to-day, I beg that the delay may not be long;" and again holding her peace a short while, she concluded thus; "If it is certainly so determined, and the decree cannot be altered, I beg that it may be no longer deferred than this next night." Having so said, and being asked by those about her with whom she talked, she said, "With my most dear mother, Ethelburg;" by which they understood, that she was come to acquaint her that the time of her departure was at hand; for, as she had desired, after one day and night, she was delivered alike from the bonds of the flesh and of her infirmity and entered into the joys of eternal salvation.

CHAP. 10

Successit autem Aedilburgi in officio abbatisae deuota Deo famula, nomine Hildilid, multisque annis, id est usque ad ultimam senectutem, eidem monasterio strenuissime, et in obseruantia disciplinae regularis, et in earum, quae ad communes usus pertinent, rerum prouidentia praefuit. Cui cum propter angustiam loci, in quo monasterium constructum est, placuisset, ut ossa famulorum famularumque Christi, quae ibidem fuerant tumulata, tollerentur, et transferrentur omnia in ecclesiam beatae Dei genetricis, unoque conderentur in loco; quoties ibi claritas luminis caelestis, quanta saepe flagrantia mirandi apparuerit odoris, quae alia sint signa ostensa, in ipso libro, de quo haec excerpsimus, quisque legerit, inueniet.

Sane nullatenus praetereundum arbitror miraculum sanitatis, quod ad ipsum cymiterium Deo dicatae congregationis factum idem libellus refert. Erat quippe in proximo comes quidam, cuius uxor ingruente oculis caligine subita, tantum per dies eadem molestia crebrescente grauata est, ut ne minimam quidem lucis alicuius posset particulam uidere. Cui, dum aliquandiu caecitatis huius nocte clausa maneret, repente uenit in mentem, quia, si ad monasterium delata uirginum sanctimonialium, ad reliquias sanctorum peteret, perditam posset recipere lucem. Nec distulit, quin continuo, quod mente conceperat, expleret. Perducta namque a puellis suis ad monasterium, quia in proximo erat, ubi fidem suae sanationis integram se habere professa est, introducta est ad cymiterium; et, cum ibidem diutius flexis genibus oraret, nihilo tardius meruit exaudiri. Nam exsurgens ab oratione, priusquam exiret de loco, petita lucis gratiam recepit;

et quae famularum manibus adducta fuerat, ipsa libero pedum incessu domum laeta reuersa est; quasi ad hoc solummodo lucem amitteret temporalem, ut, quanta sanctos Christi lux in caelis, quae gratia uirtutis possideret, sua sanatione demonstraret.

Chap. X.

How a blind woman, praying in the burial-place of that monastery, was restored to her sight. [675 a.d.?]

Hildilid, a devout handmaid of God, succeeded Ethelburg in the office of abbess and presided over that monastery with great vigour many years, till she was of an extreme old age, in the observance of regular discipline, and carefully providing all things for the common use. The narrowness of the space where the monastery is built, led her to determine that the bones of the servants and handmaidens of Christ, who had been there buried, should be taken up, and should all be translated into the church of the Blessed Mother of God, and interred in one place. How often a brightness of heavenly light was

seen there, when this was done, and a fragrancy of wonderful sweetness arose, and what other signs were revealed, whosoever reads will find in the book from which we have taken these tales.

But in truth, I think it by no means fit to pass over the miracle of healing, which the same book informs us was wrought in the cemetery of that community dedicated to God. There lived in that neighbourhood a certain thegn, whose wife was seized with a sudden dimness in her eyes, and as the malady increased daily, it became so burdensome to her, that she could not see the least glimpse of light. Having continued some time wrapped in the night of this blindness, on a sudden she bethought herself that she might recover her lost sight, if she were carried to the monastery of the nuns, and there prayed at the relics of the saints. Nor did she lose any time in fulfilling that which she had conceived in her mind: for being conducted by her maids to the monastery, which was very near, and professing that she had perfect faith that she should be there healed, she was led into the cemetery, and having long prayed there on her knees, she did not fail to be heard, for as she rose from prayer, before she went out of the place, she received the gift of sight which she had desired; and whereas she had been led thither by the hands of her maids, she now returned home joyfully without help: as if she had lost the light of this world to no other end than that she might show by her recovery how great a light is vouchsafed to the saints of Christ in Heaven, and how great a grace of healing power.

CHAP. 11

Eo tempore praeerat regno Orientalium Saxonum, ut idem etiam libellus docet, uir multum Deo deuotus, nomine Sebbi, cuius supra meminimus. Erat enim religiosus actibus, crebris precibus, piis elimosynarum fructibus plurimum intentus; uitam priuatam et monachicam cunctis regni diuitiis et honoribus praeferens, quam et olim iam, si non obstinatus coniugis animus diuortium negaret, relicto regno subisset. Unde multis uisum et saepe dictum est, quia talis animi uirum, episcopum magis quam regem ordinari deceret.

Cumque annos XXX in regno miles regni caelestis exegisset, correptus est corporis infirmitate permaxima, qua et mortuus est; ammonuitque coniugem, ut uel tunc diuino se seruitio pariter mancipient, cum amplius pariter mundum amplecti, uel potius mundo seruire non possent. Quod dum egre inpetraret ab ea, uenit ad antistitem Lundoniae ciuitatis, uocabulo Ualdheri, qui Erconualdo successerat;

et per eius benedictionem habitum religionis, quem diu desiderabat, accepit. Attulit autem eidem et summam pecuniae non paruam pauperibus erogandam, nil omnimodis sibi reseruans; sed pauper spiritu magis propter regnum caelorum manere desiderans.

Qui cum ingrauescente praefata egritudine, diem sibi mortis imminere sensisset, timere coepit homo animi regalis, ne ad mortem ueniens tanto adfectus dolore aliquid indignum suae personae uel ore proferret, uel aliorum motu gereret membrorum. Unde accito ad se praefato urbis Lundoniae, in qua tunc ipse manebat, episcopo, rogauit, ne plures eo moriente quam ipse episcopus et duo sui ministri adessent. Quod dum episcopus libentissime se facturum promitteret, non multo post idem uir Dei, dum membra sopori dedisset, uidit uisionem consolatoriam, quae omnem ei anxietatem memoratae sollicitudinis auferret, insuper et, qua die esset hanc uitam terminaturus, ostenderet. Uidit enim, ut post ipse referebat, tres ad se uenisse uiros claro indutos habitu; quorum unus residens ante lectulum eius, stantibus his, qui secum aduenerant, comitibus, et interrogantibus de statu eius, quem languentem uisitare uenerant, dixit, quod anima eius, et sine ullo dolore, et cum magno lucis splendore esset egressura de corpore; sed et tertium exinde diem, quo esset moriturus, insinuauit. Quod ita utrumque, ut ex uisione didicit, completum est. Nam die dehinc tertio, completa hora nona, subito quasi leuiter obdormiens, sine ullo sensu doloris emisit spiritum.

Cuius corpori tumulando praeparauerant sarcofagum lapideum; sed cum huic corpus inponere coepissent, inuenerunt hoc mensura palmi longius esse sarcofago. Dolantes ergo lapidem in quantum ualebant, addiderunt longitudini sarcofagi quasi duorum mensuram digitorum.

Sed nec sic quidem corpus capiebat. Unde facta difficultate tumulandi,

cogitabant aut aliud quaerere loculum, aut ipsum corpus, si possent, in genibus inflectendo breuiare, donec ipso loculo caperetur. Sed mira res et non nisi caelitus facta, ne aliquid horum fieri deberet, prohibuit. Nam subito adstante episcopo, et filio regis eiusdem ac monachi Sighardo, qui post illum cum fratre Suefredo regnauit, et turba hominum non modica, inuentum est sarcophagum illud congruae longitudinis ad mensuram corporis, adeo ut a parte capitis etiam ceruical posset interponi; a parte uero pedum mensura IIII digitorum in sarcophago corpus excederet. Conditus est autem in ecclesia beati doctoris gentium, cuius edoctus monitis caelestia sperare didicerat.

Chap. XI.

How Sebbi, king of the same province, ended his life in a monastery. [694

a.d.]

At that time, as the same little book informs us, Sebbi, a very devout man, of whom mention has been made above, governed the kingdom of the East Saxons. His mind was set on religious acts, frequent prayer and pious fruits of almsgiving; he esteemed a private and monastic life better than all the wealth and honours of his kingdom, and he would have long before left his kingdom and adopted that life, had not his wife firmly refused to be divorced from him; for which reason many were of opinion and often said that a man of such a disposition ought rather to have been made a bishop than a king. When he had spent thirty years as a king and a soldier of the heavenly kingdom, he fell into great bodily infirmity, of which he afterwards died, and he admonished his wife, that they should then at least together devote themselves to the service of God, since they could no longer together enjoy, or rather serve, the world. Having with much difficulty obtained this of her, he went to Waldhere, bishop of London, who had succeeded Earconwald, and with his blessing received the religious habit, which he had long desired. He also carried to him a considerable sum of money, to be given to the poor, reserving nothing to himself, but rather coveting to remain poor in spirit for the sake of the kingdom of Heaven.

When the aforesaid sickness increased, and he perceived the day of his death to be drawing near, being a man of a royal disposition, he began to apprehend lest, when in great pain, at the approach of death, he might commit anything unworthy of his character, either by word or gesture. Wherefore, calling to him the aforesaid bishop of London, in which city he then was, he entreated him that none might be present at his death, besides the bishop himself, and two of his own attendants. The bishop having promised that he would most willingly grant his request, not long after the man of God composed himself to sleep, and saw a consoling vision, which took from him all anxiety concerning the aforesaid uneasiness; and, moreover, showed him on what day he was to end his life. For, as he afterwards related, he saw three men in shining garments come to him; one of whom sat down by his bed,

whilst his companions who had come with him stood and inquired about the state of the sick man they had come to visit, and he said that the king's soul should quit his body without any pain, and with a great splendour of light; and told him that he should die the third day after. Both these things came to pass, as he had learnt from the vision; for on the third day after, at the ninth hour, he suddenly fell, as it were, into a light slumber, and without any sense of pain he gave up the ghost.

A stone coffin had been prepared for his burial, but when they came to lay him in it, they found his body a span longer than the coffin. Hereupon they chipped away as much of the stone as they could, and made the coffin about two inches longer; but not even so would it contain the body. Wherefore because of this difficulty of entombing him, they had thoughts either to get another coffin, or else to shorten the body, by bending it at the knees, if they could, so that the coffin might contain it. But Heaven interposed and a miracle prevented the execution of either of those designs; for on a sudden, in the presence of the bishop and Sighard, who was the son of that same king and monk, and who reigned after him jointly with his brother Suefred, and of no small number of men, that coffin was found to fit the length of the body, insomuch that a pillow might even be put in at the head; and at the feet the coffin was four inches longer than the body. He was buried in the church of the blessed teacher of the Gentiles, by whose doctrine he had learned to hope for heavenly things.

CHAP. 12

Quartus Occidentalium Saxonum antistes Leutherius fuit. Siquidem primus Birinus, secundus Agilberctus, tertius exstitit Uini. Cumque mortuus esset Coinualch, quo regnante idem Leutherius episcopus factus est, acceperunt subreguli regnum gentis, et diuisum inter se tenuerunt annis circiter X; ipsisque regnantibus defunctus est ille, et episcopatu functus Haeddi pro eo, consecratus a Theodoro in ciuitate Lundonia. Cuius episcopatus tempore deuictis atque amotis subregulis, Caeduala suscepit imperium, et, cum duobus annis hoc tenuisset, tandem superni regni amore conpunctus reliquit, eodem adhuc praesule ecclesiam gubernante; ac Romam abiens, ibi uitam finiuit, ut in sequentibus latius dicendum est.

Anno autem dominicae incarnationis DCLXXVI, cum Aedilred rex Merciorum, adducto maligno exercitu, Cantiam uastaret et ecclesias ac monasteria sine respectu pietatis uel diuini timoris fedaret, ciuitatem quoque Hrofi, in qua erat Putta episcopus, quamuis eo tempore absens, communi clade absumsit. Quod ille ubi conperiit, ecclesiam uidelicet suam rebus ablatis omnibus depopulatam, diuertit ad Sexuulfum Merciorum antistitem, et accepta ab eo possessione ecclesiae cuiusdam et agelli non grandis, ibidem in pace uitam finiuit, nil omnino de restaurando episcopatu suo agens; quia, sicut et supra diximus, magis in ecclesiasticis quam in mundanis rebus erat industrius; sed in illa solum ecclesia Deo seruiens, et ubicumque rogabatur, ad docenda ecclesiae carmina diuertens. Pro quo Theodorus in ciuitate Hrofi Cuichelmum consecrauit episcopum. Sed illo post non multum temporis prae inopia rerum ab episcopatu decedente, atque ad alia loca secedente, Gebmundum pro eo substituit antistitem.

Anno dominicae incarnationis DCLXXVIII, qui est annus imperii regis Ecgfridi VIII., apparuit mense Augusto stella, quae dicitur cometa;

et tribus mensibus permanens, matutinis horis oriebatur, excelsam radiantis flammae quasi columnam praeferens. Quo etiam anno orta inter ipsum regem Ecgfridum et reuerentissimum antistitem Ulfridum dissensione, pulsus est idem antistes a sede sui episcopatus, et duo in locum eius substituti episcopi, qui Nordanhymbrorum genti praessent; Bosa uidelicet, qui Derorum, et Eata, qui Berniciorum prouinciam gubernaret; hic in ciuitate Eburaci, ille in Hagustaldensi siue in Lindisfarnensi ecclesia cathedram habens episcopalem, ambo de monachorum collegio in episcopatus gradum adsciti. Cum quibus et Eadhaed in prouinciam Lindisfarorum. quam nuperrime rex Ecgfrid, superato in bello et fugato Uulphere, obtinuerat, ordinatur episcopus. Et hunc primum eadem prouincia proprium accepit praesulem, II Ediluini, III Eadgarum, IIII Cyniberctum, quem in praesenti habet. Habebat enim ante Eadhaedum antistitem Sexuulfum, qui etiam Merciorum et Mediterraneorum Anglorum simul episcopus fuit; unde et expulsus de Lindissi, in illarum prouinciarum

regimine permansit. Ordinati sunt autem Eadhaed, Bosa, et Eata Eboraci ab archiepiscopo Theodoro; qui etiam post tres abscissionis Uilfridi annos, horum numero duos addidit antistites, Tunberctum ad ecclesiam Hagustaldensem, remanente Eata ad Lindisfarnensem, et Trumuini ad prouinciam Pictorum, quae tunc temporis Anglorum erat imperio subiecta. Eadhaedum de Lindissi reuersum, eo quod Aedilred prouinciam recepisset, Hrypensi ecclesiae praefecit.

Chap. XII.

How Haedde succeeded Leutherius in the bishopric of the West Saxons; how Cuichelm succeeded Putta in the bishopric of the church of Rochester, and was himself succeeded by Gebmund; and who were then bishops of the Northumbrians. [673-681 a.d.]

Leutherius was the fourth bishop of the West Saxons; for Birinus was the first, Agilbert the second, and Wini the third. When Coinwalch, in whose reign the said Leutherius was made bishop, died, the sub-kings took upon them the government of the nation, and dividing it among themselves, held it for about ten years; and during their rule he died, and Haedde succeeded him in the bishopric, having been consecrated by Theodore, in the city of London. During his episcopate, Caedwalla, having subdued and removed the sub-kings, took upon himself the supreme authority. When he had held it for two years, and whilst the same bishop still governed the church, at length impelled by love of the heavenly kingdom, he quitted it and, going away to Rome, ended his days there, as shall be said more fully hereafter.

In the year of our Lord 676, when Ethelred, king of the Mercians, ravaged Kent with a hostile army, and profaned churches and monasteries, without regard to pity, or the fear of God, in the general destruction he laid waste the city of Rochester; Putta, who was bishop, was absent at that time, but when he understood that his church was ravaged, and everything taken away from it, he went to Sexwulf, bishop of the Mercians, and having received of him a certain church, and a small piece of land, ended his days there in peace; in no way endeavouring to restore his bishopric, for, as has been said above, he was more industrious in ecclesiastical than in worldly affairs; serving God only in that church, and going wherever he was desired, to teach Church music. Theodore consecrated Cuichelm bishop of Rochester in his stead; but he, not long after, departing from his bishopric for want of necessities, and withdrawing to other parts, Gebmund was put in his place by Theodore.

In the year of our Lord 678, which is the eighth of the reign of Egfrid, in the month of August, appeared a star, called a comet, which continued for three months, rising in the morning, and sending forth, as it were, a tall pillar of radiant flame. The same year a dissension broke out between King Egfrid and the most reverend prelate, Wilfrid, who was driven from his see, and two

bishops substituted for him, to preside over the nation of the Northumbrians, namely, Bosa, to govern the province of the Deiri; and Eata that of the Bernicians; the former having his episcopal see in the city of York, the latter either in the church of Hagustald, or of Lindisfarne; both of them promoted to the episcopal dignity from a community of monks. With them also Eadhaed was ordained bishop for the province of Lindsey, which King Egfrid had but newly acquired, having defeated Wulfhere and put him to flight; and this was the first bishop of its own which that province had; the second was Ethelwin; the third Edgar; the fourth Cynibert, who is there at present. Before Eadhaed, Sexwulf was bishop as well of that province as of the Mercians and Midland Angles; so that, when expelled from Lindsey, he continued in the government of those provinces. Eadhaed, Bosa, and Eata, were ordained at York by archbishop Theodore; who also, three years after the departure of Wilfrid, added two bishops to their number: Tunbert, appointed to the church of Hagustald, Eata still continuing in that of Lindisfarne; and Trumwine to the province of the Picts, which at that time was subject to English rule. Eadhaed returning from Lindsey, because Ethelred had recovered that province, was placed by Theodore over the church of Ripon.

CHAP. 13

Pulsus est autem ab episcopatu suo Uilfrid, et multa diu loca peruagatus, Romam adiit, Brittaniam rediit; et si propter inimicitias memorati regis in patria siue parochia sua recipi non potuit, non tamen ab euangelizandi potuit ministerio cohiberi;

siquidem diuertens ad prouinciam Australium Saxonum, quae post Cantuarios ad austrum et ad occidentem usque ad Occidentales Saxones pertingit, habens terram familiarum VII milium, et eo adhuc tempore paganis cultibus seruiebat; huic uerbum fidei et lauacrum salutis ministrabat. Erat autem rex gentis ipsius Aedilualch, non multo ante baptizatus in prouincia Merciorum, praesente ac suggerente rege Uulfhere a quo etiam egressus de fonte, loco filii susceptus est; in cuius signum adoptionis duas illi prouincias donauit, Uectam uidelicet insulam, et Meanuarorum prouinciam in gente Occidentalium Saxonum. Itaque episcopus, concedente, immo multum gaudente rege, primos prouinciae duces ac milites sacrosancto fonte abluebat; uerum presbyteri Eappa, et Padda, et Burghelm, et Oiddi ceteram plebem, uel tunc uel tempore sequente baptizabant. Porro regina, nomine Eabae, in sua, id est Huicciorum prouincia fuerat baptizata. Erat autem filia Eanfridi fratris anheri, qui ambo cum suo populo Christiani fuere. Ceterum tota prouincia Australium Saxonum diuini nominis et fidei erat ignara.

Erat autem ibi monachus quidam de natione Scottorum, uocabulo Dicul, habens monasteriolum permodicum in loco, qui uocatur Bosanhamm, siluis et mari circumdatum, et in eo fratres V siue VI, in humili et paupere uita Domino famulantes. Sed prouincialium nullus eorum uel uitam aemulari, uel praedicationem curabat audire.

Euangelizans autem genti episcopus Uilfrid, non solum eam ab erumna perpetuae damnationis, uerum et a clade infanda temporalis interitus eripuit. Siquidem tribus annis ante aduentum eius in prouinciam nulla illis in locis pluuia ceciderat, unde et fames acerbissima plebem inuadens impia nece prostrauit. Denique ferunt, quia saepe XL simul aut L homines inedia macerati procederent ad praecipitium aliquod siue ripam maris, et iunctis misere manibus, pariter omnes aut ruina perituri, aut fluctibus obsorbendi deciderent. Uerum ipso die, quo baptisma fidei gens suscepit illa, descendit pluuia serena, sed copiosa, reffloruit terra, rediit uiridantibus aruis annus laetus et frugifer. Sicque abiecta prisca superstitione, exsufflata idolatria, cor omnium et caro omnium exultauerunt in Deum uiuum;

intelligentes eum, qui uerus est Deus, et interioribus se bonis et exterioribus caelesti gratia ditasse. Nam et antistes cum uenisset in prouinciam, tantamque ibi famis poenam uideret, docuit eos piscando uictum quaerere. Namque mare et flumina eorum piscibus abundabant; sed piscandi peritia genti nulla nisi ad anguillas tantum inerat. Collectis ergo undecumque

retibus anguillaribus, homines antistitis miserunt in mare, et diuina se iuuante gratia, mox cepere pisces diuersi generis CCC. Quibus trifariam diuisis, C pauperibus dederunt, centum his, a quibus retia acceperant, centum in suos usus habebant. Quo beneficio multum antistes cor omnium in suum conuertit amorem, et libentius eo praedicante caelestia sperare coeperunt, cuius ministerio temporalia bona sumserunt.

Quo tempore rex Aedilualch donauit reuerentissimo antistiti Uilfrido terram LXXXVII familiarum, ubi suos homines, qui exules uagabantur, recipere posset, uocabulo SelĀ seu quod dicitur Latine insula uituli marini. Est enim locus undique mari circumdatus praeter ab occidente, unde habet ingressum amplitudinis quasi iactus fundae;

qualis locus a Latinis paeninsula, a Grecis solet cherronesos uocari. Hunc ergo locum cum accepisset episcopus Uilfrid, fundauit ibi monasterium, ac regulari uita instituit, maxime ex his, quos secum adduxerat, fratribus; quod usque hodie successores eius tenere noscuntur. Nam ipse illis in partibus annos V, hoc est usque ad mortem Ecgfridi regis, merito omnibus honorabilis, officium episcopatus et uerbo exercebat et opere. Et quoniam illi rex cum praefata loci possessione omnes, qui ibidem erant, facultates cum agris et hominibus donauit, omnes fide Christi institutos, unda baptismatis abluit; inter quos, seruos et ancillas ducentos quinquaginta; quos omnes ut baptizando a seruitute daemonica saluauit, etiam libertate donando humanae iugo seruitutis absoluit.

Chap. XIII.

How Bishop Wilfrid converted the province of the South Saxons to Christ. [681 a.d.]

But Wilfrid was expelled from his bishopric, and having long travelled in many lands, went to Rome, and afterwards returned to Britain. Though he could not, by reason of the enmity of the aforesaid king, be received into his own country or diocese, yet he could not be restrained from the ministry of the Gospel; for, taking his way into the province of the South Saxons, which extends from Kent to the south and west, as far as the West Saxons, containing land of 7,000 families, and was at that time still in bondage to pagan rites, he administered to them the Word of faith, and the Baptism of salvation. Ethelwalch, king of that nation, had been, not long before, baptized in the province of the Mercians, at the instance of King Wulfhere, who was present, and received him as his godson when he came forth from the font, and in token of this adoption gave him two provinces, to wit, the Isle of Wight, and the province of the Meanware, in the country of the West Saxons. The bishop, therefore, with the king's consent, or rather to his great joy, cleansed in the sacred font the foremost ealdormen and thegns of that country; and the priests, Eappa, and Padda, and Burghelm, and Oiddi, either then, or

afterwards, baptized the rest of the people. The queen, whose name was Eabae, had been baptized in her own country, the province of the Hwiccas. She was the daughter of Eanfrid, the brother of Aenhere, who were both Christians, as were their people; but all the province of the South Saxons was ignorant of the Name of God and the faith. But there was among them a certain monk of the Scottish nation, whose name was Dicul, who had a very small monastery, at the place called Bosanhamm, encompassed by woods and seas, and in it there were five or six brothers, who served the Lord in humility and poverty; but none of the natives cared either to follow their course of life, or hear their preaching.

But Bishop Wilfrid, while preaching the Gospel to the people, not only delivered them from the misery of eternal damnation, but also from a terrible calamity of temporal death. For no rain had fallen in that district for three years before his arrival in the province, whereupon a grievous famine fell upon the people and pitilessly destroyed them; insomuch that it is said that often forty or fifty men, wasted with hunger, would go together to some precipice, or to the sea-shore, and there, hand in hand, in piteous wise cast themselves down either to perish by the fall, or be swallowed up by the waves. But on the very day on which the nation received the Baptism of the faith, there fell a soft but plentiful rain; the earth revived, the fields grew green again, and the season was pleasant and fruitful. Thus the old superstition was cast away, and idolatry renounced, the heart and flesh of all rejoiced in the living God, for they perceived that He Who is the true God had enriched them by His heavenly grace with both inward and outward blessings. For the bishop, when he came into the province, and found so great misery from famine there, taught them to get their food by fishing; for their sea and rivers abounded in fish, but the people had no skill to take any of them, except eels alone. The bishop's men having gathered eel-nets everywhere, cast them into the sea, and by the blessing of God took three hundred fishes of divers sorts, which being divided into three parts, they gave a hundred to the poor, a hundred to those of whom they had the nets, and kept a hundred for their own use. By this benefit the bishop gained the affections of them all, and they began more readily at his preaching to hope for heavenly blessings, seeing that by his help they had received those which are temporal.

At this time, King Ethelwalch gave to the most reverend prelate, Wilfrid, land to the extent of eighty-seven families, to maintain his company who were wandering in exile. The place is called Selaeseu, that is, the Island of the Sea-Calf; it is encompassed by the sea on all sides, except the west, where is an entrance about the cast of a sling in width; which sort of place is by the Latins called a peninsula, by the Greeks, a cherronesos. Bishop Wilfrid, having this place given him, founded therein a monastery, chiefly of the brethren he had brought with him, and established a rule of life; and his successors are known to be there to this day. He himself, both in word and deed performed the

duties of a bishop in those parts during the space of five years, until the death of King Egfrid, and was justly honoured by all. And forasmuch as the king, together with the said place, gave him all the goods that were therein, with the lands and men, he instructed all the people in the faith of Christ, and cleansed them in the water of Baptism. Among whom were two hundred and fifty bondsmen and bondswomen, all of whom he saved by Baptism from slavery to the Devil, and in like manner, by giving them their liberty, set them free from slavery to man.

CHAP. 14

In quo tunc monasterio nonnulla caelestis gratiae dona specialiter ostensa fuisse perhibentur; utpote ubi nuper expulsa diaboli tyrannide Christus iamregnare coeperat; e quibus unum, quod mihi reuerentissimus antistes Acca sepius referre, et a fidelissimis eiusdem monasterii fratribus sibi relatum asserere solebat, memoriae mandare commodum duximus.

Eodem ferme tempore, quo ipsa prouincia nomen Christi suscepit, multas Brittaniae prouincias mortalitas saeua corripiebat. Quae cum praefatum quoque monasterium, cui tunc regendo religiosissimus Christi sacerdos, uocabulo Eappa, praefuit, nutu diuinae dispensationis attingeret; multique siue de his, qui cum antistite illo uenerant, siue de illis, qui de eadem prouincia Saxonum nuper ad fidem fuerant uocati, passim de hac uita raperentur; uisum est fratribus triduanum ieiunium agere, et diuinam suppliciter obsecrare clementiam, ut misericordiam sibi dignaretur inpendere, et siue periclitantes hoc morbo a praesenti morte liberaret, seu raptos e mundo a perpetua animae damnatione seruaret.

Erat tunc temporis in eodem monasterio puerulus quidam de natione Saxonum, nuper uocatus ad fidem, qui eadem tactus infirmitate, non pauco tempore recubans in lectulo iacebat. Cum ergo secunda memorati ieiunii ac supplicationum dies ageretur, contigit forte ipsum puerum hora ferme secunda diei in loco, in quo eger iacebat, solum inueniri; cui diuina dispositione subito beatissimi apostolorum principes dignati sunt apparere. Erat enim puer multum simplicis ac mansueti animi, sinceraque deuotione sacramenta fidei, quae suscepit, seruans. Salutantes ergo illum uerbis piissimis apostoli dicebant: 'Noli timere, fili, mortem, pro qua sollicitus es; nos enim te hodierna die ad caelestia sumus regna perducturi. Sed primum expectare habes, donec missae celebrentur, ac uiatico dominici corporis ac sanguinis accepto, sic infirmitate simul et morte absolutus, ad aeterna in caelis gaudia subleueris. Clama ergo ad te presbyterum Eappan, et dicito illi, quia Dominus exaudiuit preces uestras, et deuotionem ac ieiunia propitius aspexit; neque aliquis de hoc monasterio siue adiacentibus ei possessiunculis hac clade ultra moriturus est; sed omnes, qui alicubi de uestris hac egritudine laborant, resurrecturi a langore, pristina sunt sospitate recuperandi, praeter te solum qui hodierna es die liberandus a morte, et ad uisionem Domini Christi, cui fideliter seruisti, perducendus in caelum; quod diuina uobis misericordia per intercessionem religiosi ac Deo dilecti regis Osualdi, qui quondam genti Nordanhymbrorum et regni temporalis auctoritate et Christianae pietatis, quae ad regnum perenne ducit, deuotione sublimiter praefuit, conferre dignata est. Hac etenim die idem rex ab infidelibus in bello corporaliter extinctus, mox ad sempiterna animarum gaudia adsumtus in caelum, et electorum est sociatus agminibus. Quaerant in suis codicibus, in quibus defunctorum est adnotata depositio, et inuenient illum hac, ut diximus, die raptum esse de saeculo. Celebrent ergo missas per

cuncta monasterii oratoria huius, siue pro gratiarum actione exaudita suae deprecationis, siue etiam in memoriam praefati regis Osualdi, qui quondam ipsorum genti praeerat, ideoque pro eis, quasi pro suae gentis aduenis, supplex orabat ad Dominum; et cunctis conuenientibus ad ecclesiam fratribus, communicent omnes sacrificiis caelestibus, et ita soluto ieiunio corpus quoque suis reficiant alimentis.’

Quae cum omnia uocato ad se presbytero puer uerba narrasset, interrogauit eum sollicitus, quales essent habitu uel specie uiri, qui sibi apparuissent. Respondit: ‘Praeclari omnino habitus, et uultus erant laetissimi ac pulcherrimi, quales numquam ante uideram, neque aliquos hominum tanti decoris ac uenustatis esse posse credebam. Unus quidem adtonsus erat, ut clericus, alius barbam habebat prolixam; dicebantque, quod unus eorum Petrus, alius uocaretur Paulus; et ipsi essent ministri Domini et Saluatoris nostri Iesu Christi, ad tuitionem nostri monasterii missi ab ipso de caelis.’ Credidit ergo uerbis pueri presbyter, ac statim egressus requisiiuit in annale suo, et inuenit eadem ipsa die Osualdum regem fuisse peremtum; uocatisque fratribus, parari prandium, missas fieri, atque omnes communicare more solito praecepit; simul et infirmanti puero de eodem sacrificio dominicae oblationis particulam deferri mandauit.

Quibus ita gestis, non multo post eadem ipsa die puer defunctus est, suaque morte probauit uera fuisse uerba, quae ab apostolis Christi audierat. Sed et hoc eius uerbis testimonium perhibuit, quod nemo praeter ipsum tempore illo ex eodem est monasterio raptus de mundo.

Ex qua nimirum uisione multi, qui haec audire potuerunt, et ad exorandam in aduersis diuinam clementiam, et ad salutaria ieiuniorum remedia subeunda sunt mirabiliter accensi; et ex eo tempore non solum in eodem monasterio, sed et in plerisque locis aliis, coepit annuatim eiusdem regis ac militis Christi natalicius dies missarum celebratione uenerari.

Chap. XIV.

How a pestilence ceased through the intercession of King Oswald. [681-686 a.d.]

In this monastery, at that time, certain special manifestations of the heavenly grace are said to have been shown forth; in as much as the tyranny of the Devil had been recently cast out and Christ had begun to reign there. Of these I have thought it proper to perpetuate the memory of one which the most reverend Bishop Acca was wont often to relate to me, affirming that it had been told him by most creditable brothers of the same monastery. About the same time that this province had received the faith of Christ, a grievous pestilence fell upon many provinces of Britain; which, also, by the Divine dispensation, reached to the aforesaid monastery, then governed by the most religious priest of Christ, Eappa; and many, as well of those that had come

thither with the bishop, as of those of the same province of the South Saxons who had been lately called to the faith, were snatched away out of this world. The brethren, therefore, thought fit to keep a fast of three days, and humbly to implore the Divine goodness to vouchsafe to have mercy on them, either by delivering from instant death those that were in danger by reason of the disease, or by saving those who were hurried out of this life from the eternal damnation of their souls.

There was at that time in the monastery, a little boy, of the Saxon nation, lately called to the faith, who had been attacked by the same infirmity, and had long kept his bed. On the second day of the aforesaid fasting and prayer, it happened about the second hour of the day, that this boy was left alone in the place where he lay sick, when on a sudden, through the Divine disposition, the most blessed chiefs of the Apostles vouchsafed to appear to him; for he was a boy of a very simple and gentle disposition, and with sincere devotion observed the mysteries of the faith which he had received. The Apostles therefore, greeting him with loving words, said, "My son, fear not death, concerning which thou art troubled; for this day we will bring thee to the kingdom of Heaven; but first thou must needs wait till the Masses are celebrated, that having received thy voyage provision, the Body and Blood of our Lord, and so being set free from sickness and death, thou mayest be taken up to the everlasting joys in Heaven.

"Call therefore to thee the priest, Eappa, and tell him, that the Lord has heard your prayers, and has favourably looked upon your devotion and your fast, and not one more shall die of this plague, either in the monastery or the lands adjacent to it; but all your people who any where labour under this sickness, shall be raised up from their weakness, and restored to their former health, saving thee alone, who art this day to be delivered from death, and to be carried into Heaven, to behold our Lord Christ, whom thou hast faithfully served. This favour the Divine mercy has vouchsafed to grant you, through the intercession of the godly King Oswald, beloved of God, who formerly nobly ruled over the nation of the Northumbrians, with the authority of a temporal kingdom and the devotion of Christian piety which leads to the eternal kingdom. For this very day that king was killed in body by the infidels in war, and straightway taken up to Heaven to the everlasting joys of souls, and brought into fellowship with the number of the elect. Let them look in their records, wherein the burial of the dead is set down, and they will find that he was, this day, as we have said, taken out of this world. Let them, therefore, celebrate Masses in all the oratories of this monastery, either in thanksgiving because their prayers are heard, or else in memory of the aforesaid King Oswald, who once governed their nation, and therefore humbly prayed to the Lord for them, as for converts of his nation; and let all the brethren assemble in the church, and all communicate in the heavenly Sacrifices, and so let them cease to fast, and refresh the body also with the

food that belongs to it.”

The boy called the priest, and repeated all these words to him; and the priest carefully inquired after the habit and form of the men that had appeared to him. He answered, “Their habit was altogether noble, and their countenances most pleasant and beautiful, such as I had never seen before, nor did I think there could be any men so fair and comely. One of them indeed was shorn like a clerk, the other had a long beard; and they said that one of them was called Peter, the other Paul; and they were the servants of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, sent by Him from Heaven to protect our monastery.” The priest believed what the boy said, and going thence immediately, looked in his chronicle, and found that King Oswald had been killed on that very day. He then called the brethren, ordered dinner to be provided, Masses to be said, and all of them to communicate as usual; causing also a part of the same Sacrifice of the Lord’s Oblation to be carried to the sick boy.

Soon after this, the boy died, on that same day; and by his death proved that the words which he had heard from the Apostles of Christ were true. And this moreover bore witness to the truth of his words, that none besides himself, belonging to the same monastery, was taken away at that time. And without doubt, by this vision, many that heard of it were wonderfully excited to implore the Divine mercy in adversity, and to submit to the wholesome remedy of fasting. From that time, the day of commemoration of that king and soldier of Christ began to be yearly honoured with the celebration of Masses, not only in that monastery, but in many other places.

CHAP. 15

Interea superueniens cum exercitu Caedwalla, iuuenis strenuissimus de regio genere Geuissorum, cum exularet a patria sua, interfecit regem Aedilualch, ac prouinciam illam saeua caede ac depopulatione attriuit; sed mox expulsus est a ducibus regis, Bercthuno et Andhuno, qui deinceps regnum prouinciae tenuerunt;

quorum prior postea ab eodem Caedwalla, cum esset rex Geuissorum, occisus est, et prouincia grauiore seruitio subacta. Sed et Ini, qui post Caedwallan regnauit, simili prouinciam illam adflictione plurimo annorum tempore mancipauit. Quare factum est, ut toto illo tempore episcopum proprium habere nequiret; sed reuocato domum Uilfrido primo suo antistite, ipsi episcopo Geuissorum, id est Occidentalium Saxonum, qui essent in Uenta ciuitate, subiacerent.

Chap. XV.

How King Caedwalla, king of the Gewissae, having slain Ethelwalch, wasted that Province with cruel slaughter and devastation. [685 a.d.]

In the meantime, Caedwalla, a young man of great vigour, of the royal race of the Gewissae, an exile from his country, came with an army, slew Ethelwalch, and wasted that province with cruel slaughter and devastation; but he was soon expelled by Berthun and Andhun, the king's ealdormen, who held in succession the government of the province. The first of them was afterwards killed by the same Caedwalla, when he was king of the Gewissae, and the province was reduced to more grievous slavery: Ini, likewise, who reigned after Caedwalla, oppressed that country with the like servitude for many years; for which reason, during all that time, they could have no bishop of their own; but their first bishop, Wilfrid, having been recalled home, they were subject to the bishop of the Gewissae, that is, the West Saxons, who were in the city of Venta.

CHAP. 16

Postquam ergo Caedualia regno potitus est Geuissorum, cepit et insulam Uectam, quae eatenus erat tota idolatriae dedita, ac stragica caede omnes indigenas exterminare, ac suae prouinciae homines pro his substituere contendit, uoto se obligans, quamuis necdum regeneratus, ut ferunt, in Christo, quia, si cepisset insulam, quartam partem eius simul et praedae Domino daret. Quod ita soluit, ut hanc Uilfrido episcopo, qui tunc forte de gente sua superueniens aderat, utendam pro Domino offerret. Est autem mensura eiusdem insulae, iuxta aestimationem Anglorum, mille ducentarum familiarum; unde data est episcopo possessio terrae CCCarum familiarum. At ipse partem, quam accepit, commendauit cuidam de clericis suis, cui nomen Bernuini, et erat filius sororis eius, dans illi presbyterum nomine Hiddila, qui omnibus, qui saluari uellent, uerbum ac lauacrum uitae ministraret.

Ubi silentio praetereundum non esse reor, quod in primitias eorum, qui de eadem insula credendo saluati sunt, duo regii pueri fratres uidelicet Arualdi regis insulae, speciali sunt Dei gratia coronati.

Siquidem imminentibus insulae hostibus, fuga lapsi sunt de insula, et in proximam Iutorum prouinciam translati; ubi, cum delati in locum, qui uocatur Ad Lapidem, occulendos se a facie regis uictoris credidissent, proditi sunt, atque occidi iussi. Quod cum audisset abbas quidam et presbyter uocabulo Cyniberct, habens non longe ab inde monasterium in loco, qui uocatur Hreutford, id est uadum harundinis, uenit ad regem, qui tunc eisdem in partibus occultus curabatur a uulneribus, quae ei inflictas fuerant proelianti in insula Uecta; postulauitque ab eo, ut, si necesse esset pueros interfici, prius eos liceret fidei Christianae sacramentis inui.

Concessit rex, et ipse instructos eos uerbo ueritatis, ac fonte Saluatoris ablutos, de ingressu regni aeterni certos reddidit.

Moxque illi instante carnifice mortem laeti subiere temporalem, per quam se ad uitam animae perpetuam non dubitabant esse transituros.

Hoc ergo ordine, postquam omnes Britanniarum prouinciae fidem Christi susceperant, suscepit et insula Uecta, in quam tamen ob erumnam externae subiectionis nemo gradum ministerii ac sedis episcopalis ante Danihelem, qui nunc Occidentalium Saxonum est episcopus, accepit.

Sita est autem haec insula contra medium Australium Saxonum et Geuissorum, interposito pelago latitudinis trium milium, quod uocatur Soluente; in quo uidelicet pelago bini aestus oceani, qui circum Britanniam ex infinito oceano septentrionali erumpunt, sibimet inuicem cotidie conpugnantes occurrunt ultra ostium fluminis Homelea, quod per terras Iutorum, quae ad regionem Geuissorum pertinent, praefatum pelagus intrat; finitoque conflictu in oceanum refusi, unde uenerant, redeunt.

How the Isle of Wight received Christian inhabitants, and two royal youths of that island were killed immediately after Baptism. [686 a.d.]

After Caedwalla had obtained possession of the kingdom of the Gewissae, he took also the Isle of Wight, which till then was entirely given over to idolatry, and by merciless slaughter endeavoured to destroy all the inhabitants thereof, and to place in their stead people from his own province; binding himself by a vow, though it is said that he was not yet regenerated in Christ, to give the fourth part of the land and of the spoil to the Lord, if he took the island. He fulfilled this vow by giving the same for the service of the Lord to Bishop Wilfrid, who happened at the time to have come thither from his own people. The measure of that island, according to the computation of the English, is of twelve hundred families, wherefore an estate of three hundred families was given to the Bishop. The part which he received, he committed to one of his clerks called Bernwin, who was his sister's son, assigning to him a priest, whose name was Hiddila, to administer the Word and laver of life to all that would be saved.

Here I think it ought not to be omitted that, as the first fruits of those of that island who believed and were saved, two royal boys, brothers to Arwald, king of the island, were crowned with the special grace of God. For when the enemy approached, they made their escape out of the island, and crossed over into the neighbouring province of the Jutes. Coming to the place called At the Stone, they thought to be concealed from the victorious king, but they were betrayed and ordered to be killed. This being made known to a certain abbot and priest, whose name was Cynibert, who had a monastery not far from there, at a place called Hreutford, that is, the Ford of Reeds, he came to the king, who then lay in concealment in those parts to be cured of the wounds which he had received whilst he was fighting in the Isle of Wight, and begged of him, that if the boys must needs be killed, he might be allowed first to instruct them in the mysteries of the Christian faith. The king consented, and the bishop having taught them the Word of truth, and cleansed them in the font of salvation, assured to them their entrance into the kingdom of Heaven. Then the executioner came, and they joyfully underwent the temporal death, through which they did not doubt they were to pass to the life of the soul, which is everlasting. Thus, after this manner, when all the provinces of Britain had received the faith of Christ, the Isle of Wight also received the same; yet because it was suffering under the affliction of foreign subjection, no man there received the office or see of a bishop, before Daniel, who is now bishop of the West Saxons.

The island is situated opposite the borders of the South Saxons and the Gewissae, being separated from it by a sea, three miles wide, which is called Solvente. In this sea, the two tides of the ocean, which break upon Britain all

round its coasts from the boundless northern ocean, daily meet in conflict beyond the mouth of the river Homelea, which runs into the aforesaid sea, through the lands of the Jutes, belonging to the country of the Gewissae; and after this struggle of the tides, they fall back and return into the ocean whence they come.

CHAP. 17

His temporibus audiens Theodorus fidem ecclesiae Constantinopoli per heresim Eutychetis multum esse turbatam, et ecclesias Anglorum, quibus praeerat, ab huiusmodi labe immunes perdurare desiderans, collecto uenerabilium sacerdotum doctorumque plurimorum coetu, cuius essent fidei singuli, sedulus inquirebat, omniumque unanimum in fide catholica repperit consensum; et hunc synodalibus litteris ad instructionem memoriamque sequentium commendare curauit, quarum uidelicet litterarum istud exordium est:

In nomine Domini nostri Iesu Christi Saluatoris, imperantibus dominis piissimis nostris Ecgfrido rege Hymbronensium, anno Xo regni eius, sub die XV Kalendas Octobres, indictione VIIIa; et Aedilredo rege Mercinensium, anno sexto regni eius; et Alduulfo rege Estranglorum, anno XVIIo regni eius; et Hlothario rege Cantuariorum, regni eius anno VIIo; praesidente Theodoro, gratia Dei archiepiscopo Britanniae insulae et ciuitatis Doruuernis; una cum eo sedentibus ceteris episcopis Britanniae insulae uiris uenerabilibus, praepositis sacrosanctis euangeliiis, in loco, qui Saxonico uocabulo Haethfelth nominatur, pariter tractantes, fidem rectam et orthodoxam exposuimus; sicut Dominus noster Iesus Christus incarnatus tradidit discipulis suis, qui praesentialiter uiderunt, et audierunt sermones eius, atque sanctorum patrum tradidit symbolum, et generaliter omnes sancti et uniuersales synodi, et omnis probabiliū catholicae ecclesiae doctorum chorus. Hos itaque sequentes, nos pie atque orthodoxe, iuxta diuinitus inspiratam doctrinam eorum professi credimus consonanter, et confitemur secundum sanctos patres, proprie et ueraciter Patrem et Filium et Spiritum Sanctum trinitatem in unitate consubstantialē et unitatem in trinitate, hoc est unum Deum in tribus subsistentiis, uel personis consubstantialibus, aequalis gloriae et honoris.

Et post multa huiusmodi, quae ad rectae fidei confessionem pertinebant, haec quoque sancta synodus suis litteris addit:

Suscipimus sanctas et uniuersales quinque synodos beatorum et Deo acceptabilium patrum; id est, qui in Nicaea congregati fuerunt CCCX et VIII contra Arrium impiissimum et eiusdem dogmata; et in Constantinopoli CL contra uesaniā Macedonii et Eudoxii et eorum dogmata; et in Efeso primo ducentorum contra ncquissimum Nestorium et eiusdem dogmata; et in Calcedone DCrum et XXX contra Eutychen, et Nestorium, et eorum dogmata; et iterum in Constantinopoli quinto congregati sunt concilio in tempore Iustiniani minoris contra Theodorum, et Theodoreti et Iba epistulas, et eorum dogmata contra Cyrillum.

Et paulo post:

Et synodum, quae facta est in urbe Roma in tempore Martini papae

beatissimi, indictione VIIIa, imperante Constantino piissimo anno nono, suscipimus. Et glorificamus Dominum nostrum Iesum, sicut isti glorificauerunt; nihil addentes uel subtrahentes; et anathematizamus corde et ore, quos anathematizarunt, et quos susceperunt, suscipimus; glorificantes Deum Patrem sine initio, et Filium eius unigenitum ex Patre generatum ante saecula, et Spiritum Sanctum procedentem ex Patre et Filio inenarrabiliter, sicut praedicauerunt hi, quos memorauimus supra, sancti apostoli, et prophetae, et doctores. Et nos omnes subscribimus, qui cum Theodoro archiepiscopo fidem catholicam exposuimus.

Chap. XVII.

Of the Synod held in the plain of Haethfelth, Archbishop Theodore being president. [680 a.d.]

About this time, Theodore being informed that the faith of the Church at Constantinople was much perplexed by the heresy of Eutyches, and desiring that the Churches of the English, over which he presided, should remain free from all such taint, convened an assembly of venerable bishops and many learned men, and diligently inquired into the faith of each. He found them all of one mind in the Catholic faith, and this he caused to be committed to writing by the authority of the synod as a memorial, and for the instruction of succeeding generations; the beginning of which document is as follows:

“In the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, under the rule of our most pious lords, Egfrid, king of the Northumbrians, in the tenth year of his reign, the seventeenth of September, the eighth indiction; Ethelred, king of the Mercians, in the sixth year of his reign; Aldwulf king of the East Angles, in the seventeenth year of his reign; and Hlothere, king of Kent, in the seventh year of his reign; Theodore, by the grace of God, archbishop of the island of Britain, and of the city of Canterbury, being president, and the other venerable bishops of the island of Britain sitting with him, the holy Gospels being laid before them, at the place which, in the Saxon tongue, is called Haethfelth, we conferred together, and set forth the right and orthodox faith, as our Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh delivered the same to His disciples, who beheld His Presence and heard His words, and as it is delivered by the creed of the holy fathers, and by all holy and universal synods in general, and by the consent of all approved doctors of the Catholic Church. We, therefore, following them, in piety and orthodoxy, and professing accordance with their divinely inspired doctrine, do believe agreeably to it, and with the holy fathers confess the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost, to be properly and truly a Trinity consubstantial in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, that is, one God in three Subsistences or consubstantial persons, of equal glory and honour.”

And after much more of the same sort, appertaining to the confession of the right faith, this holy synod added to its document, “We acknowledge the

five holy and general councils of the blessed fathers acceptable to God; that is, of the 318 assembled at Nicaea, against the most impious Arius and his tenets; and at Constantinople, of 150, against the madness of Macedonius and Eudoxius, and their tenets; and at Ephesus, for the first time, of 200, against the most wicked Nestorius, and his tenets; and at Chalcedon, of 630, against Eutyches and Nestorius, and their tenets; and again, at Constantinople, in a fifth council, in the time of Justinian the younger, against Theodorus, and the epistles of Theodoret and Ibas, and their tenets in opposition to Cyril.” And again a little lower, “the synod held in the city of Rome, in the time of the blessed Pope Martin, in the eighth indiction, and in the ninth year of the most pious Emperor Constantine, we also acknowledge. And we glorify our Lord Jesus Christ, as they glorified Him, neither adding aught nor taking away; anathematizing with hearts and lips those whom they anathematized, and receiving those whom they received; glorifying God the Father, Who is without beginning, and His only-begotten Son, begotten of the Father before the worlds, and the Holy Ghost proceeding ineffably from the Father and the Son, even as those holy Apostles, prophets, and doctors, whom we have above-mentioned, did declare. And all we, who, with Archbishop Theodore, have thus set forth the Catholic faith, thereto subscribe.”

CHAP. 18

Intererat huic synodo, pariterque catholicae fidei decreta firmabat uir uenerabilis Iohannes archicantator ecclesiae sancti apostoli Petri, et abbas monasterii beati Martini, qui nuper uenerat a Roma per iussionem papae Agathonis, duce reuerentissimo abbate Biscopo cognomine Benedicto, cuius supra meminimus. Cum enim idem Benedictus construxisset monasterium Britanniae in honorem beatissimi apostolorum principis, iuxta ostium fluminis Uiuri, uenit Romam cum cooperatore ac socio eiusdem operis Ceolfrido, qui post ipsum eiusdem monasterii abbas fuit, quod et ante sepius facere consueuerat, atque honorifice a beatae memoriae papa Agathone susceptus est; petiitque et accepit ab eo, in munimentum libertatis monasterii, quod fecerat, epistolam priuilegii ex auctoritate apostolica firmatam; iuxta quod Ecgfridum regem uoluisse ac licentiam dedisse nouerat, quo concedente et possessionem terrae largiente, ipsum monasterium fecerat.

Accepit et praefatum Iohannem abbatem Britanniam perducendum;

quatenus in monasterio suo cursum canendi annum, sicut ad sanctum Petrum Romae agebatur, edoceret; egitque abba Iohannes, ut iussionem acceperat pontificis, et ordinem uidelicet, ritumque canendi ac legendi uiua uoce praefati monasterii cantores edocendo, et ea, quae totius anni circulus in celebratione dierum festorum poscebat, etiam litteris mandando; quae hactenus in eodem monasterio seruata, et a multis iam sunt circumquaque transscripta. Non solum autem idem Iohannes ipsius monasterii fratres docebat, uerum de omnibus pene eiusdem prouinciae monasteriis ad audiendum eum, qui cantandi erant periti, confluebant. Sed et ipsum per loca, in quibus doceret, multi inuitare curabant.

Ipse autem excepto cantandi uel legendi munere, et aliud in mandatis ab apostolico papa acceperat, ut, cuius esset fidei Anglorum ecclesia, diligenter edisceret, Romamque rediens referret. Nam et synodum beati papae Martini, centum quinque episcoporum consensu non multo ante Romae celebratam, contra eos maxime, qui unam in Christo operationem et uoluntatem praedicabant, secum ueniens adtulit; atque in praefato religiosissimi abbatis Benedicti monasterio transscribendam commodauit. Tales namque eo tempore fidem Constantinopolitanae ecclesiae multum conturbauerunt; sed Domino donante proditi iam tunc et uicti sunt. Unde uolens Agatho papa, sicut in aliis prouinciis, ita etiam in Britannia qualis esset status ecclesiae, quam ab hereticorum contagiis castus, ediscere, hoc negotium reuerentissimo abbati Iohanni Britanniam destinato iniunxit. Quamobrem collecta pro hoc in Britannia synodo, quam diximus. inuenta est in omnibus fides inuiolata catholica; datumque illi exemplar eius Romam perferendum.

Uerum ille patriam reuertens, non multo postquam oceanum transiit, arreptus infirmitate ac defunctus est; corpusque eius ab amicis propter

amorem sancti Martini, cuius monasterio praeerat, Turonis delatum atque honorifice sepultum est. Nam et benigno ecclesiae illius hospitio, cum Britanniam iret, exceptus est, rogatusque multum a fratribus, ut Romam reuertens, illo itinere ueniret, atque ad eam diuerneret ecclesiam; denique ibidem adiutores itineris et iniuncti operis accepit. Qui etsi in itinere defunctus est, nihilominus exemplum catholicae fidei Anglorum Romam perlatum est, atque ab apostolico papa omnibusque, qui audiere uel legere, gratantissime susceptum.

Chap. XVIII.

Of John, the precentor of the Apostolic see, who came into Britain to teach. [680 a.d.]

Among those who were present at this synod, and confirmed the decrees of the Catholic faith, was the venerable John, archchanter of the church of the holy Apostle Peter, and abbot of the monastery of the blessed Martin, who had come lately from Rome, by order of Pope Agatho, together with the most reverend Abbot Biscop, surnamed Benedict, of whom mention has been made above. For the said Benedict, having built a monastery in Britain, in honour of the most blessed chief of the Apostles, at the mouth of the river Wear, went to Rome with Ceolfrid, his companion and fellow-labourer in that work, who was after him abbot of the same monastery; he had been several times before at Rome, and was now honourably received by Pope Agatho of blessed memory; from whom he also asked and obtained, in order to secure the immunities of the monastery which he had founded, a letter of privilege confirmed by apostolic authority, according to what he knew to be the will and grant of King Egfrid, by whose consent and gift of land he had built that monastery.

He was also allowed to take the aforesaid Abbot John with him into Britain, that he might teach in his monastery the system of singing throughout the year, as it was practised at St. Peter's at Rome. The Abbot John did as he had been commanded by the Pope, teaching the singers of the said monastery the order and manner of singing and reading aloud, and committing to writing all that was requisite throughout the whole course of the year for the celebration of festivals; and these writings are still preserved in that monastery, and have been copied by many others elsewhere. The said John not only taught the brothers of that monastery, but such as had skill in singing resorted from almost all the monasteries of the same province to hear him, and many invited him to teach in other places.

Besides his task of singing and reading, he had also received a commission from the Apostolic Pope, carefully to inform himself concerning the faith of the English Church, and to give an account thereof on his return to Rome. For he also brought with him the decision of the synod of the blessed Pope

Martin, held not long before at Rome, with the consent of one hundred and five bishops, chiefly to refute those who taught that there is but one operation and will in Christ, and he gave it to be transcribed in the aforesaid monastery of the most religious Abbot Benedict. The men who followed such opinion greatly perplexed the faith of the Church of Constantinople at that time; but by the help of God they were then discovered and overcome. Wherefore, Pope Agatho, being desirous to be informed concerning the state of the Church in Britain, as well as in other provinces, and to what extent it was clear from the contagion of heretics, gave this matter in charge to the most reverend Abbot John, then appointed to go to Britain. The synod we have spoken of having been called for this purpose in Britain, the Catholic faith was found untainted in all, and a report of the proceedings of the same was given him to carry to Rome.

But in his return to his own country, soon after crossing the sea, he fell sick and died; and his body, for the sake of St. Martin, in whose monastery he presided, was by his friends carried to Tours, and honourably buried; for he had been kindly entertained by the Church there on his way to Britain, and earnestly entreated by the brethren, that in his return to Rome he would take that road, and visit their Church, and moreover he was there supplied with men to conduct him on his way, and assist him in the work enjoined upon him. Though he died by the way, yet the testimony of the Catholic faith of the English nation was carried to Rome, and received with great joy by the Apostolic Pope, and all those that heard or read it.

CHAP. 19

Accepit autem rex Ecgfrid coniugem nomine Aedilthrydam, filiam Anna regis Orientalium Anglorum, cuius sepius mentionem fecimus, uiri bene religiosi, ac per omnia mente et opere egregii; quam et alter ante illum uir habuerat uxorem, princeps uidelicet Australium Gyruiorum uocabulo Tondberct. Sed illo post modicum temporis, ex quo eam accepit, defuncto, data est regi praefato; cuius consortio cum XII annis uteretur, perpetua tamen mansit uirginitatis integritate gloriosa; sicut mihimet sciscitanti, cum hoc, an ita esset, quibusdam uenisset in dubium, beatae memoriae Uilfrid episcopus referebat, dicens se testem integritatis eius esse certissimum; adeo ut Ecgfridus promiserit se ei terras ac pecunias multas esse donaturum, si reginae posset persuadere eius uti conubio, quia sciebat illam nullum uirorum plus illo diligere. Nec diffidendum est nostra etiam aetate fieri potuisse, quod aeuo praecedente aliquoties factum fideles historiae narrant; donante uno eodemque Domino, qui se nobiscum usque in finem saeculi manere pollicetur. Nam etiam signum diuini miraculi, quo eiusdem feminae sepulta caro corrumpi non potuit, indicio est, quia uirili contactu incorrupta durauerit.

Quae multum diu regem postulans, ut saeculi curas relinquere, atque in monasterio, tantum uero regi Christo seruire permetteretur; ubi uix aliquando inpetrauit, intrauit monasterium Aebba abbatisae, quae erat amita regis Ecgfridi, positum in loco, quem Coludi urbem nominant, accepto uelamine sanctimonialis habitus a praefato antistite Uilfrido. Post annum uero ipsa facta est abbatisa in regione, quae uocatur Elge; ubi constructo monasterio uirginum Deo deuotarum perplurium mater uirgo, et exemplis uitae caelestis esse coepit et monitis. De qua ferunt, quia, ex quo monasterium petiit, numquam lineis, sed solum laneis uestimentis uti uoluerit; raroque in calidis balneis, praeter imminentibus sollempniis maioribus, uerbi gratia paschae, pentecostes, epifaniae, lauari uoluerit; et tunc nouissima omnium, lotis prius suo suarumque ministrarum obsequio ceteris, quae ibi essent, famulis Christi; raro praeter maiora sollempnia, uel artiore necessitatem, plus quam semel per diem manducauerit; semper, si non infirmitas grauior prohibuisset, ex tempore matutinae synaxeos, usque ad ortum diei, in ecclesia precibus intenta persteterit. Sunt etiam, qui dicant, quia per prophetiae spiritum, et pestilentiam, qua ipsa esset moritura, praedixerit, et numerum quoque eorum, qui de suo monasterio hac essent de mundo rapiendi, palam cunctis praesentibus intimauerit.

Rapta est autem ad Dominum in medio suorum, post annos VII, ex quo abbatisae gradum susceperat; et aequae, ut ipsa iusserat, non alibi quam in medio eorum, iuxta ordinem, quo transierat, ligneo in locello sepulta.

Cui successit in ministerium abbatisae soror eius Sexburg, quam habuerat in coniugem Earconberct rex Cantuariorum. Et cum sedecim annis esset

sepulta, placuit eidem abbatissae leuari ossa eius, et in locello nouo posita in ecclesiam transferri; iussitque quosdam e fratribus quaerere lapidem, de quo locellum in hoc facere possent;

qui ascensa nauis, ipsa enim regio Elge undique est aquis ac paludibus circumdata, neque lapides maiores habet, uenerunt ad ciuitatulam quandam desolatam, non procul inde sitam, quae lingua Anglorum Grantacaestir uocatur; et mox inuenerunt iuxta muros ciuitatis locellum de marmore albo pulcherrime factum, operculo quoque similis lapidis aptissime tectum. Unde intellegentes a Domino suum iter esse prosperatum, gratias agentes rettulerunt ad monasterium.

Cumque corpus sacrae uirginis ac sponsae Christi aperto sepulchro esset prolatum in lucem, ita incorruptum inuentum est, ac si eodem die fuisset defuncta, siue humo condita; sicut et praefatus antistes Uilfrid, et multi alii, qui nouere, testantur; sed certiori notitia medicus Cynifrid, qui et morienti illi, et eleuatae de tumulo adfuit; qui referre erat solitus, quod illa infirmata habuerit tumorem maximum sub maxilla; ‘Iusseruntque me,’ inquit, ‘incidere tumorem illum, ut efflueret noxius umor, qui inerat; quod dum facerem, uidebatur illa per biduum aliquanto leuius habere; ita ut multi putarent, quia sanari posset a langore. Tertia autem die prioribus adgrauata doloribus, et rapta confestim de mundo, dolorem omnem ac mortem perpetua salute ac uita mutauit. Cumque post tot annos eleuanda essent ossa de sepulchro, et extento desuper papilione, omnis congregatio, hinc fratrum, inde sororum, psallens circumstaret; ipsa autem abbatissa intus cum paucis ossa elatura et dilutura intrasset, repente audiuius abbatissam intus uoce clara proclamare: “Sit gloria nomini Domini.” Nec multo post clamauerunt me intus, reserato ostio papilionis; uidique eleuatum de tumulo, et positum in lectulo corpus sacrae Deo uirginis quasi dormientis simile. Sed et discooperto uultus indumento, monstrauerunt mihi etiam uulnus incisurae, quod feceram, curatum; ita ut mirum in modum pro aperto et hiante uulnere, cum quo sepulta erat, tenuissima tunc cicatricis uestigia parerent. Sed et linteamina omnia, quibus inuolutum erat corpus, integra apparuerunt, et ita noua, ut ipso die uiderentur castis eius membris esse circumdata.’ Ferunt autem, quia, cum praefato tumore ac dolore maxillae siue colli premeretur, multum delectata sit hoc genere infirmitatis, ac solita dicere: ‘Scio certissime, quia merito in collo pondus langoris porto, in quo iuuenulam me memini superuacua moniliorum pondera portare; et credo, quod ideo me superna pietas dolore colli uoluit grauari, ut sic absoluar reatu superuacuae leuitatis; dum mihi nunc pro auro et margaritis, de collo rubor tumoris ardorque promineat.’ Contigit autem tactu indumentorum eorundem et daemonia ab obsessis effugata corporibus, et infirmitates alias aliquoties esse curatas. Sed et loculum, in quo primo sepulta est, nonnullis oculis dolentibus saluti fuisse perhibent; qui cum suum caput eidem loculo adponentes orassent, mox doloris siue caliginis incommodum ab oculis amouerent.

Lauerunt igitur uirgines corpus, et nouis indutum uestibus intulerunt in ecclesiam, atque in eo, quod adlatum erat, sarcophago posuerunt, ubi usque hodie in magna ueneratione habetur. Mirum uero in modum ita aptum corpori uirginis sarcophagum inuentum est, ac si ei specialiter praeparatum fuisset; et locus quoque capitis seorsum fabrefactus ad mensuram capitis illius aptissime figuratus apparuit.

Est autem Elge in prouincia Orientalium Anglorum regio familiarum circiter sexcentarum, in similitudinem insulae uel paludibus, ut diximus, circumdata uel aquis; unde et a copia anguillarum, quae in eisdem paludibus capiuntur, nomen accepit; ubi monasterium habere desiderauit memorata Christi famula, quoniam de prouincia eorundem Orientalium Anglorum ipsa, ut praefati sumus, carnis originem duxerat.

Chap. XIX.

How Queen Ethelthryth always preserved her virginity, and her body suffered no corruption in the grave. [660-696 a.d.]

King Egfrid took to wife Ethelthryth, the daughter of Anna, king of the East Angles, of whom mention has been often made; a man of true religion, and altogether noble in mind and deed. She had before been given in marriage to another, to wit, Tondbert, ealdorman of the Southern Gyrwas; but he died soon after he had married her, and she was given to the aforesaid king. Though she lived with him twelve years, yet she preserved the glory of perfect virginity, as I was informed by Bishop Wilfrid, of blessed memory, of whom I inquired, because some questioned the truth thereof; and he told me that he was an undoubted witness to her virginity, forasmuch as Egfrid promised to give him many lands and much money if he could persuade the queen to consent to fulfil her marriage duty, for he knew the queen loved no man more than himself. And it is not to be doubted that this might take place in our age, which true histories tell us happened sometimes in former ages, by the help of the same Lord who promises to abide with us always, even unto the end of the world. For the divine miracle whereby her flesh, being buried, could not suffer corruption, is a token that she had not been defiled by man.

She had long asked of the king that he would permit her to lay aside worldly cares, and to serve only Christ, the true King, in a monastery; and having at length with difficulty prevailed, she entered the monastery of the Abbess Aebba, who was aunt to King Egfrid, at the place called the city of Coludi, having received the veil of the religious habit from the hands of the aforesaid Bishop Wilfrid; but a year after she was herself made abbess in the district called Elge, where, having built a monastery, she began, by the example of a heavenly life and by her teaching, to be the virgin mother of many virgins dedicated to God. It is told of her that from the time of her entering the monastery, she would never wear any linen but only woollen

garments, and would seldom wash in a hot bath, unless just before the greater festivals, as Easter, Whitsuntide, and the Epiphany, and then she did it last of all, when the other handmaids of Christ who were there had been washed, served by her and her attendants. She seldom ate more than once a day, excepting on the greater festivals, or some urgent occasion. Always, except when grievous sickness prevented her, from the time of matins till day-break, she continued in the church at prayer. Some also say, that by the spirit of prophecy she not only foretold the pestilence of which she was to die, but also, in the presence of all, revealed the number of those that should be then snatched away from this world out of her monastery. She was taken to the Lord, in the midst of her flock, seven years after she had been made abbess; and, as she had ordered, was buried among them in a wooden coffin in her turn, according to the order in which she had passed away.

She was succeeded in the office of abbess by her sister Sexburg, who had been wife to Earconbert, king of Kent. This abbess, when her sister had been buried sixteen years, thought fit to take up her bones, and, putting them into a new coffin, to translate them into the church. Accordingly she ordered some of the brothers to find a stone whereof to make a coffin for this purpose. They went on board ship, for the district of Ely is on every side encompassed with water and marshes, and has no large stones, and came to a small deserted city, not far from thence, which, in the language of the English, is called Grantacaestir, and presently, near the city walls, they found a white marble coffin, most beautifully wrought, and fitly covered with a lid of the same sort of stone. Perceiving, therefore, that the Lord had prospered their journey, they returned thanks to Him and carried it to the monastery.

When the grave was opened and the body of the holy virgin and bride of Christ was brought into the light of day, it was found as free from corruption as if she had died and been buried on that very day; as the aforesaid Bishop Wilfrid, and many others that know it, testify. But the physician, Cynfrid, who was present at her death, and when she was taken up out of the grave, had more certain knowledge. He was wont to relate that in her sickness she had a very great tumour under her jaw. "And I was ordered," said he, "to lay open that tumour to let out the noxious matter in it, which I did, and she seemed to be somewhat more easy for two days, so that many thought she might recover from her infirmity; but on the third day she was attacked by the former pains, and being soon snatched out of the world, she exchanged all pain and death for everlasting life and health. And when, so many years after, her bones were to be taken out of the grave, a pavilion being spread over it, and all the congregation, the brothers on the one side, and the sisters on the other, standing about it singing, while the abbess, with a few others, had gone within to take up and wash the bones, on a sudden we heard the abbess within cry out with a loud voice, 'Glory be to the name of the Lord.' Not long after they called me in, opening the door of the pavilion, and I found the body of

the holy virgin taken out of the grave and laid on a bed, like one asleep; then taking off the veil from the face, they also showed me that the incision which I had made was healed up; so that, in marvellous wise, instead of the open gaping wound with which she had been buried, there then appeared only the slightest trace of a scar. Besides, all the linen clothes in which the body had been wrapped, appeared entire and as fresh as if they had been that very day put about her chaste limbs."

It is said that when she was sore troubled with the aforesaid tumour and pain in her jaw and neck, she took great pleasure in that sort of sickness, and was wont to say, "I know of a surety that I deservedly bear the weight of my trouble on my neck, for I remember that, when I was a young maiden, I bore on it the needless weight of necklaces; and therefore I believe the Divine goodness would have me endure the pain in my neck, that so I may be absolved from the guilt of my needless levity, having now, instead of gold and pearls, the fiery heat of a tumour rising on my neck." It happened also that by the touch of those same linen clothes devils were expelled from bodies possessed, and other diseases were at divers times healed; and the coffin wherein she was first buried is said to have cured some of infirmities of the eyes, who, praying with their heads resting upon that coffin, were presently relieved of the pain or dimness in their eyes. So they washed the virgin's body, and having clothed it in new garments, brought it into the church, and laid it in the sarcophagus that had been brought, where it is held in great veneration to this day. The sarcophagus was found in a wonderful manner to fit the virgin's body as if it had been made purposely for her, and the place for the head, which was fashioned separately, appeared exactly shaped to the measurement of her head.

Elge is in the province of the East Angles, a district of about six hundred families, of the nature of an island, encompassed, as has been said, with marshes or waters, and therefore it has its name from the great plenty of eels taken in those marshes; there the aforesaid handmaid of Christ desired to have a monastery, because, as we have before mentioned, she came, according to the flesh, of that same province of the East Angles.

CHAP. 20

Uidetur oportunum huic historiae etiam hymnum uirginitatis inserere, quem ante annos plurimos in laudem ac praeconium eiusdem reginae ac sponsae Christi, et ideo ueraciter reginae, quia sponsae Christi, elegiaco metro composuimus; et imitari morem sacrae scripturae, cuius historiae carmina plurima indita, et haec metro ac uersibus constat esse composita.

Alma Deus Trinitas, quae saecula cuncta gubernas, Adnue iam coeptis, alma Deus Trinitas.

Bella Maro resonet, nos pacis dona canamus; Munera nos Christi, bella Maro resonet.

Carmina casta mihi, fedae non raptus Helenae; Luxus erit lubricis, carmina casta mihi.

Dona superna loquar, miserae non proelia Troiae; Terra quibus gaudet, dona superna loquar.

En Deus altus adit uenerandae uirginis aluum, Liberet ut homines, en Deus altus adit.

Femina uirgo parit mundi deuota parentem, Porta Maria Dei, femina uirgo parit.

Gaudet amica cohors de uirgine matre tonantis; Uirginitate micans gaudet amica cohors.

Huius honor genuit casto de germine plures, Uirgineos flores huius honor genuit.

Ignibus usta feris, uirgo non cessit Agathe, Eulalia et perfert, ignibus usta feris.

Kasta feras superat mentis pro culmine Tecla, Eufemia sacras kasta feras superat.

Laeta ridet gladios ferro robustior Agnes, Caecilia infestos laeta ridet gladios.

Multus in orbe uiget per sobria corda triumphus, Sobrietatis amor multus in orbe uiget.

Nostra quoque egregia iam tempora uirgo beaut; Aedilthryda nitet nostra quoque egregia.

Orta patre eximio, regali et stemmate clara, Nobilior Domino est, orta patre eximio.

Percipit inde decus reginae, et scepra sub astris, Plus super astra manens, percipit inde decus.

Quid petis, alma, uirum, sponso iam dedita summo? Sponsus adest

Christus; quid petis, alma, uirum?

Regis ut aetherei matrem iam credo sequaris, Tu quoque sis mater regis ut aetherei.

Sponsa dicata Deo bis sex regnauerat annis, Inque monasterio est sponsa dicata Deo.

Tota sacrata polo celsis ubi floruit actis, Reddidit atque animam tota sacrata polo.

Uirginis alma caro est tumulata bis octo Nouembres, Nec putet in tumulto uirginis alma caro.

Xriste, tui est operis, quia uestis et ipsa sepulchro Inuiolata nitet: Xriste, tui est operis.

Ydros et ater abit sacrae pro uestis honore, Morbi diffugiunt, ydros et ater abit.

Zelus in hoste furit, quondam qui uicerat Euam; Uirgo triumphat ouans, zelus in hoste furit.

Aspice, nupta Deo, quae sit tibi gloria terris; Quae maneat caelis, aspice, nupta Deo.

Munera laeta capis, festiuis fulgida taedis, Ecce uenit sponsus, munera laeta capis.

Et noua dulcisono modularis carmina plectro, Sponsa hymno exultas et noua dulcisono.

Nullus ab altithroni comitatu segregat agni, Quam affectu tulerat nullus ab altithroni.

Chap. XX.

A Hymn concerning her.

It seems fitting to insert in this history a hymn concerning virginity, which we composed in elegiac verse many years ago, in praise and honour of the same queen and bride of Christ, and therefore truly a queen, because the bride of Christ; and to imitate the method of Holy Scripture, wherein many songs are inserted in the history, and these, as is well known, are composed in metre and verse.

“Trinity, Gracious, Divine, Who rulest all the ages; favour my task, Trinity, Gracious, Divine.

“Let Maro sound the trumpet of war, let us sing the gifts of peace; the gifts of Christ we sing, let Maro sound the trumpet of war.

“Chaste is my song, no rape of guilty Helen; light tales shall be told by the wanton, chaste is my song.

“I will tell of gifts from Heaven, not wars of hapless Troy; I will tell of gifts from Heaven, wherein the earth is glad.

“Lo! the high God comes to the womb of a holy virgin, to be the Saviour of men, lo! the high God comes.

“A hallowed maid gives birth to Him Who gave the world its being; Mary, the gate of God, a maiden gives Him birth.

“The company of her fellows rejoices over the Virgin Mother of Him Who wields the thunder; a shining virgin band, the company of her fellows rejoices.

“Her honour has made many a blossom to spring from that pure shoot, virgin blossoms her honour has made to spring.

“Scorched by the fierce flames, the maiden Agatha yielded not; in like manner Eulalia endures, scorched by the fierce flames.

“The lofty soul of chaste Tecla overcomes the wild beasts; chaste Euphemia overcomes the accursed wild beasts.

“Agnes joyously laughs at the sword, herself stronger than steel, Cecilia joyously laughs at the foemen’s sword.

“Many a triumph is mighty throughout the world in temperate hearts; throughout the world love of the temperate life is mighty.

“Yea, and our day likewise a peerless maiden has blessed; peerless our Ethelthryth shines.

“Child of a noble sire, and glorious by royal birth, more noble in her Lord’s sight, the child of a noble sire.

“Thence she receives queenly honour and a sceptre in this world; thence she receives honour, awaiting higher honour above.

“What need, gracious lady, to seek an earthly lord, even now given to the Heavenly Bridegroom?

“Christ is at hand, the Bridegroom (why seek an earthly lord?) that thou mayst follow even now, methinks, in the steps of the Mother of Heaven’s King, that thou too mayst be a mother in God.

“Twelve years she had reigned, a bride dedicated to God, then in the cloister dwelt, a bride dedicated to God.

“To Heaven all consecrated she lived, abounding in lofty deeds, then to Heaven all consecrated she gave up her soul.

“Twice eight Novembers the maid’s fair flesh lay in the tomb, nor did the maid’s fair flesh see corruption in the tomb.

“This was Thy work, O Christ, that her very garments were bright and undefiled even in the grave; O Christ, this was Thy work.

“The dark serpent flies before the honour due to the holy raiment; disease

is driven away, and the dark serpent flies.

“Rage fills the foe who of old conquered Eve; exultant the maiden triumphs and rage fills the foe.

“Behold, O bride of God, thy glory upon earth; the glory that awaits thee in the Heavens behold, O bride of God.

“In gladness thou receivest gifts, bright amidst the festal torches; behold! the Bridegroom comes, in gladness thou receivest gifts.

“And a new song thou singest to the tuneful harp; a new-made bride, thou exuldest in the tuneful hymn.

“None can part her from them which follow the Lamb enthroned on high, whom none had severed from the Love enthroned on high.”

CHAP. 21

Anno regni Ecgfridi nono, conserto graui proelio inter ipsum et Aedilredum regem Merciorum iuxta fluuium Treanta, occisus est Aelfuini frater regis Ecgfridi, iuuenis circiter X et VIII annorum, utrique prouinciae multum amabilis. Nam et sororem eius, quae dicebatur Osthryd, rex Aedilred habebat uxorem. Cumque materies belli acrioris et inimicitiae longioris inter reges populosque feroces uideretur exorta, Theodorus Deo dilectus antistes, diuino functus auxilio, salutifera exhortatione coeptum tanti periculi funditus extinguit incendium; adeo ut, pacatis alterutrum regibus ac populis, nullius anima hominis pro interfecto regis fratre, sed debita solummodo multa pecuniae regi ultori daretur. Cuius foedera pacis multo exinde tempore inter eosdem reges eorumque regna durarunt.

Chap. XXI.

How Bishop Theodore made peace between the kings Egfrid and Ethelred. [679 a.d.]

In the ninth year of the reign of King Egfrid, a great battle was fought between him and Ethelred, king of the Mercians, near the river Trent, and Aelfwine, brother to King Egfrid, was slain, a youth about eighteen years of age, and much beloved by both provinces; for King Ethelred had married his sister Osthryth. There was now reason to expect a more bloody war, and more lasting enmity between those kings and their fierce nations; but Theodore, the bishop, beloved of God, relying on the Divine aid, by his wholesome admonitions wholly extinguished the dangerous fire that was breaking out; so that the kings and their people on both sides were appeased, and no man was put to death, but only the due mulct paid to the king who was the avenger for the death of his brother; and this peace continued long after between those kings and between their kingdoms.

CHAP. 22

In praefato autem proelio, quo occisus est rex Aelfuini, memorabile quiddam factum esse constat, quod nequaquam silentio praetereundum arbitror, sed multorum saluti, si referatur, fore proficuum. Occisus est ibi inter alios de militia eius iuuenis, uocabulo Imma; qui cum die illo et nocte sequenti inter cadauera occisorum similis mortuo iaceret, tandem recepto spiritu reuixit, ac residens, sua uulnera, prout potuit, ipse alligauit; dein modicum requietus, leuauit se, et coepit abire, sicubi amicos, qui sui curam agerent, posset inuenire. Quod dum faceret, inuentus est, et captus a uiris hostilis exercitus, et ad dominum ipsorum, comitem uidelicet Aedilredi regis, adductus. A quo interrogatus, qui esset, timuit se militem fuisse confiteri; rusticum se potius et pauperem, atque uxoreo uinculo conligatum fuisse respondit; et propter uictum militibus adferendum in expeditionem se cum sui similibus uenisse testatus est. At ille suscipiens eum, curam uulneribus egit; et ubi sanescere coepit, noctu eum, ne aufugeret, uinciri praecepit. Nec tamen uinciri potuit; nam mox, ut abiire, qui uinxerant, eadem eius sunt uincula soluta.

Habebat enim germanum fratrem, cui nomen erat Tunna, presbyterum et abbatem monasterii in ciuitate, quae hactenus ab eius nomine Tunnacaestir cognominatur; qui cum eum in pugna peremtum audiret, uenit quaerere, si forte corpus eius inuenire posset, inuentumque alium illi per omnia simillimum, putauit ipsum esse; quem ad monasterium suum deferens, honorifice sepeliuit, et pro absolutione animae eius sepius missas facere curauit. Quarum celebratione factum est, quod dixi, ut nullus eum posset uincire, quin continuo solueretur. Interea comes, qui eum tenebat, mirari et interrogare coepit, quare ligari non posset, an forte litteras solutorias, de qualibus fabulae ferunt, apud se haberet, propter quas ligari non posset. At ille respondit nil se talium artium nosse; ‘Sed habeo fratrem,’ inquit, ‘presbyterum in mea prouincia, et scio, quia ille me interfectum putans pro me missas crebras facit; et si nunc in alia uita essem, ibi anima mea per intercessionem eius solueretur a poenis.’ Dumque aliquanto tempore apud comitem teneretur, animaduenterunt, qui eum diligentius considerabant, ex uultu et habitu et sermonibus eius, quia non erat de paupere uulgo, ut dixerat, sed de nobilibus. Tunc secreto aduocans eum comes, interrogauit eum intentius, unde esset, promittens se nil ei mali facturum pro eo, si simpliciter sibi, quis fuisset, proderet. Quod dum ille faceret, ministrum se regis fuisse manifestans, respondit: ‘Et ego per singula tua responsa cognoueram, quia rusticus non eras, et nunc dignus quidem es morte, quia omnes fratres et cognati mei in illa sunt pugna interemti; nec te tamen occidam, ne fidem mei promissi praeuaricer.’

Ut ergo conualuit, uendidit eum Lundoniam Freso cuidam; sed nec ab illo, nec cum illuc duceretur, ullatinus potuit alligari. Uerum cum alia atque alia

uinculorum ei genera hostes inponerent, cumque uidisset, qui emerat, uinculis eum non potuisse cohiberi, donauit ei facultatem sese redimendi, si posset. A tertia autem hora, quando missae fieri solebant, sepiissime uincula soluebantur. At ille dato iure iurando, ut rediret, uel pecuniam illi pro se mitteret, uenit Cantiam ad regem Hlothéri, qui erat filius sororis Aedilthyrae reginae, de qua supra dictum est, quia et ipse quondam eiusdem reginae minister fuerat; petiitque et accepit ab eo pretium suae redemptionis, ac suo domino pro se, ut promiserat, misit.

Qui post haec patriam reuersus, atque ad suum fratrem perueniens, replicauit ex ordine cuncta, quae sibi aduersa, quaeue in aduersis solacia prouenissent; cognouitque, referente eo, illis maxime temporibus sua fuisse uincula soluta, quibus pro se missarum fuerant celebrata sollemnia. Sed et alia, quae periclitanti ei commoda contigissent et prospera, per intercessionem fraternam, et oblationem hostiae salutaris caelitus sibi fuisse donata intellexit.

Multique haec a praefato uiro audientes, accensi sunt in fide ac deuotione pietatis ad orandum, uel ad elimosynas faciendas, uel ad offerendas Deo uictimas sacrae oblationis, pro ereptione suorum, qui de saeculo migrauerant; intellexerunt enim, quia sacrificium salutare ad redemptionem ualeret et animae et corporis sempiternam.

Hanc mihi historiam etiam quidam eorum, qui ab ipso uiro, in quo facta est, audire, narrarunt; unde eam, quia liquido conperi, indubitanter historiae nostrae ecclesiasticae inserendam credidi.

Chap. XXII.

How a certain captive's chains fell off when Masses were sung for him. [679
a.d.]

In the aforesaid battle, wherein King Aelfwine was killed, a memorable incident is known to have happened, which I think ought by no means to be passed over in silence; for the story will be profitable to the salvation of many. In that battle a youth called Imma, one of the king's thegns, was struck down, and having lain as if dead all that day and the next night among the bodies of the slain, at length he came to himself and revived, and sitting up, bound his own wounds as best as he could. Then having rested awhile, he stood up, and went away to see if he could find any friends to take care of him; but in so doing he was discovered and taken by some of the enemy's army, and carried before their lord, who was one of King Ethelred's nobles. Being asked by him who he was, and fearing to own himself a thegn, he answered that he was a peasant, a poor man and married, and he declared that he had come to the war with others like himself to bring provisions to the army. The noble entertained him, and ordered his wounds to be dressed, and when he began to recover, to prevent his escaping, he ordered him to be bound at night. But he could not be bound, for as soon as they that bound him were gone, his bonds were loosed.

Now he had a brother called Tunna, who was a priest and abbot of a monastery in the city which is still called Tunnacaestir after him. This man, hearing that his brother had been killed in the battle, went to see if haply he could find his body; and finding another very like him in all respects, he believed it to be his. So he carried it to his monastery, and buried it honourably, and took care often to say Masses for the absolution of his soul; the celebration whereof occasioned what I have said, that none could bind him but he was presently loosed again. In the meantime, the noble that had kept him was amazed, and began to inquire why he could not be bound; whether perchance he had any spells about him, such as are spoken of in stories. He answered that he knew nothing of those arts; "but I have," said he, "a brother who is a priest in my country, and I know that he, supposing me to be killed, is saying frequent Masses for me; and if I were now in the other life, my soul there, through his intercession, would be delivered from penalty."

When he had been a prisoner with the noble some time, those who attentively observed him, by his countenance, habit, and discourse, took notice, that he was not of the meaner sort, as he had said, but of some quality. The noble then privately sending for him, straitly questioned him, whence he came, promising to do him no harm on that account if he would frankly confess who he was. This he did, declaring that he had been a thegn of the king's, and the noble answered, "I perceived by all your answers that you were no peasant. And now you deserve to die, because all my brothers and relations were killed in that fight; yet I will not put you to death, that I may not break my promise."

As soon, therefore, as he was recovered, he sold him to a certain Frisian at London, but he could not in any wise be bound either by him, or as he was being led thither. But when his enemies had put all manner of bonds on him, and the buyer perceived that he could in no way be bound, he gave him leave to ransom himself if he could. Now it was at the third hour, when the Masses were wont to be said, that his bonds were most frequently loosed. He, having taken an oath that he would either return, or send his owner the money for the ransom, went into Kent to King Hlothere, who was son to the sister of Queen Ethelthryth, above spoken of, for he had once been that queen's thegn. From him he asked and obtained the price of his freedom, and as he had promised, sent it to his master for his ransom.

Returning afterwards into his own country, and coming to his brother, he gave him an exact account of all his misfortunes, and the consolation afforded to him in them; and from what his brother told him he understood, that his bonds had been generally loosed at those times when Masses had been celebrated for him; and he perceived that other advantages and blessings which had fallen to his lot in his time of danger, had been conferred on him from Heaven, through the intercession of his brother, and the Oblation of the saving Sacrifice. Many, on hearing this account from the aforesaid man, were

stirred up in faith and pious devotion to prayer, or to alms-giving, or to make an offering to God of the Sacrifice of the holy Oblation, for the deliverance of their friends who had departed this world; for they knew that such saving Sacrifice availed for the eternal redemption both of body and soul. This story was also told me by some of those who had heard it related by the man himself to whom it happened; therefore, since I had a clear understanding of it, I have not hesitated to insert it in my Ecclesiastical History.

CHAP. 23

Anno post hunc sequente, hoc est anno dominicae incarnationis DCLXXX, religiosissima Christi famula Hild, abbatissa monasterii, quod dicitur Strenaeshalc, ut supra rettulimus, post multa, quae fecit in terris, opera caelestia, ad percipienda praemia vitae caelestis de terris ablata transiit die XV. Kalendarum Decembrium, cum esset annorum LXVI; quibus aequa partione divisus, XXXIII primos in saeculari habitu nobilissime conversata conplevit, et totidem sequentes nobiliter in monachica vita Domino consecravat. Nam et nobilis natus erat, hoc est filia nepotis Edwini regis, vocabulo Hererici; cum quo etiam rege, ad praedicationem beatae memoriae Paulini primi Nordanhymbrorum episcopi, fidem et sacramenta Christi suscepit, atque haec, usquedum ad eius visionem pervenire meruit, intemerata servavit.

Quae cum, relicto habitu saeculari, illi soli servire decrevisset, secessit ad provinciam Orientalium Anglorum, erat namque propinqua regis illius, desiderans exinde, siquo modo posset, derelicta patria et omnibus, quaecumque habuerat, Galliam peruenire, atque in monasterio Cale peregrinam pro Domino vitam ducere, quo facilius perpetuam in caelis patriam posset mereri. Nam et in eodem monasterio soror ipsius Heresuid, mater Alduulfi regis Orientalium Anglorum, regularibus subdita disciplinis, ipso tempore coronam expectabat aeternam; cuius aemulata exemplum, et ipsa proposito peregrinandi annum totum in praefata provincia retenta est; deinde ab Aidano episcopo patriam reuocata accepit locum unius familiae ad septentrionalem plagam Uiri fluminis, ubi aequae anno uno monachicam cum paucis sociis vitam agebat.

Post haec facta est abbatissa in monasterio, quod vocatur Heruteu;

quod uidelicet monasterium factum erat non multo ante a religiosa Christi famula Heiu, quae prima feminarum fertur in provincia Nordanhymbrorum propositum uestemque sanctimonialis habitus, consecrante Aidano episcopo, suscepisse. Sed illa post non multum tempus facti monasterii secessit ad civitatem Calciariam, quae a gente Anglorum Kalcacaestir appellatur, ibique sibi mansionem instituit. Praelata autem regimini monasterii illius famula Christi Hild, mox hoc regulari uita per omnia, prout a doctis uiris discere poterat, ordinare curabat; nam et episcopus Aidan, et quique nouerant eam religiosi, pro insita ei sapientia et amore diuini famulatus, sedulo eam uisitare, obnixè amare, diligenter erudire solebant.

Cum ergo aliquot annos huic monasterio regularis uitae institutioni multum intenta praesset, contigit eam suscipere etiam construendum siue ordinandum monasterium in loco, qui vocatur Streaneshalc, quod opus sibi iniunctum non segniter inpleuit. Nam eisdem, quibus prius monasterium, etiam hoc disciplinis uitae regularis instituit; et quidem multam ibi quoque iustitiae,

pietatis, et castimoniae, ceterarumque uirtutum, sed maxime pacis et caritatis custodiam docuit; ita ut in exemplum primitivae ecclesiae nullus ibi dives, nullus esset egens, omnibus essent omnia communia, cum nihil cuiusquam esse uideretur proprium. Tantaque erat ipsa prudentiae, ut non solum mediocres quique in necessitatibus suis, sed etiam reges ac principes nonnumquam ab ea consilium quaererent, et inuenirent. Tantum lectioni diuinarum scripturarum suos uacare subditos, tantum operibus iustitiae se exercere faciebat, ut facillime uiderentur ibidem, qui ecclesiasticum gradum, hoc est altaris officium, apte subirent, plurimi posse repperiri.

Denique V ex eodem monasterio postea episcopus uidimus, et hos omnes singularis meriti ac sanctitatis uiros, quorum haec sunt nomina, Bosa, Aetla, Oftfor, Iohannes, et Uilfrid. De primo supra diximus, quod Eboraci fuerit consecratus antistes; de secundo breuiter intimandum, quod in episcopatum Dorciccastra fuerit ordinatus; de ultimis infra dicendum est, quod eorum primus Hagustaldensis, secundus Eboracensis ecclesiae sit ordinatus episcopus. De medio nunc dicamus, quia, cum in utroque Hildae abbatissae monasterio lectioni et obseruationi scripturarum operam dedisset, tandem perfectiora desiderans, uenit Cantiam ad archiepiscopum beatae recordationis Theodorum; ubi postquam aliquandiu lectionibus sacris uacauit, etiam Romam adire curauit, quod eo tempore magnae uirtutis aestimabatur; et inde cum rediens Britanniam adisset, diuertit ad prouinciam Huicciorum, cui tunc rex Osric praefuit; ibique uerbum fidei praedicans, simul et exemplum uiuendi sese uidentibus atque audientibus exhibens, multo tempore mansit. Quo tempore antistes prouinciae illius, uocabulo Bosel, tanta erat corporis infirmitate depressus, ut officium episcopatus per se implere non posset;

propter quod omnium iudicio praefatus uir in episcopatum pro eo electus, ac iubente Aedilredo rege per Uilfridum beatae memoriae antistitem, qui tunc temporis Mediterraneorum Anglorum episcopatum gerebat, ordinatus est; pro eo, quod archiepiscopus Theodorus iam defunctus erat, et necdum alius pro eo ordinatus episcopus. In quam uidelicet prouinciam paulo ante, hoc est ante praefatum uirum Dei Boselum, uir strenuissimus ac doctissimus atque excellentis ingenii uocabulo Tatfrid, de eiusdem abbatissae monasterio electus est antistes; sed, priusquam ordinari posset, morte inmatura praereptus est.

Non solum ergo praefata Christi ancilla et abbatissa Hild, quam omnes, qui nouerant, ob insigne pietatis et gratiae matrem uocare consueverant, in suo monasterio uitae exemplo praesentibus extitit;

sed etiam plurimis longe manentibus, ad quos felix industriae ac uirtutis eius rumor peruenit, occasionem salutis et correctionis ministravit. Oportebat namque impleri somnium, quod mater eius Bregusuid in infantia eius uidit. Quae cum uir eius Hereric exularet sub rege Brettonum Cerdice, ubi et ueneno periit, uidit per somnium, quasi subito sublatum eum quaesierit cum omni diligentia, nullumque eius uspium uestigium apparuerit. Uerum cum solertissime illum quaesierit, extemplo se repperire sub ueste sua monile

pretiosissimum; quod, dum attentius consideraret, tantifulgore luminis refulgere uidebatur, ut omnes Britanniae fines illius gratia splendoris inpleret. Quod nimirum somnium ueraciter in filia eius, de qua loquimur, expletum est; cuius uita non sibi solummodo, sed multis bene uiuere uolentibus exempla operum lucis praebeuit.

Uerum illa cum multis annis huic monasterio praeesset, placuit pio prouisorii salutis nostrae sanctam eius animam longa etiam infirmitate carnis examinari, ut, iuxta exemplum apostoli, uirtus eius in infirmitate perficeretur. Percussa etenim febribus acri coepit ardore fatigari, et per sex continuos annos eadem molestia laborare non cessabat; in quo toto tempore numquam ipsa uel conditori suo gratias agere, uel commissum sibi gregem et puplice et priuatim docere praetermittebat. Nam suo praedocta exemplo, monebat omnes et in salute accepta corporis Domino obtemperanter seruiendum, et in aduersis rerum siue infirmitatibus membrorum fideliter Domino esse gratias semper agendas. VIIo ergo suae infirmitatis anno, conuerso ad interanea dolore, ad diem peruenit ultimum, et circa galli cantum, percepto uiatico sacrosanctae communionis, cum arcessitis ancillis Christi, quae erant in eodem monasterio, de seruanda eas inuicem, immo cum omnibus pace euangelica ammoneret;

inter uerba exhortationis laeta mortem uidit, immo, ut uerbis Domini loquar, de morte transiuit ad uitam.

Qua uidelicet nocte Dominus omnipotens obitum ipsius in alio longius posito monasterio, quod ipsa eodem anno construxerat, et appellatur Hakanos, manifesta uisione reuelare dignatus est. Erat in ipso monasterio quaedam sanctimonialis femina, nomine Begu, quae XXX et amplius annos dedicata Domino uirginitate, in monachica conuersatione seruiebat. Haec tunc in dormitorio sororum pausans, audiuit subito in aere notum campanae sonum, quo ad orationes excitari uel conuocari solebant, cum quis eorum de saeculo fuisset euocatus; apertisque, ut sibi uidebatur, oculis, aspexit, detecto domus culmine, fusam desuper lucem omnia repleuisse; cui uidelicet luci dum sollicita intenderet, uidit animam praefatae Dei famulae in ipsa luce, comitantibus ac ducentibus angelis, ad caelum ferri.

Cumque somno excussa uideret ceteras pausantes circa se sorores, intellexit uel in somnio, uel in uisione mentis ostensum sibi esse, quod uiderat. Statimque exsurgens, nimio timore perterrita, cucurrit ad uirginem, quae tunc monasterio abbatissae uice praefuit, cui nomen erat Frigyd, fletuque ac lacrimis multum perfusa, ac suspiria longa trahens, nuntiauit matrem illarum omnium Hild abbatissam iam migrasse de saeculo, et se aspectante cum luce immensa, ducibus angelis, ad aeternae limina lucis et supernorum consortia ciuium ascendisse. Quod cum illa audisset, suscitauit cunctas sorores, et in ecclesiam conuocatas orationibus ac psalmis pro anima matris operam dare monuit. Quod cum residuo noctis tempore diligenter agerent, uenerunt primo diluculo fratres, qui eius obitum nuntiarent, a loco, ubi defuncta est. At illae respondentes dixerunt se prius eadem cognouisse; et,

cum exponerent per ordinem, quomodo haec uel quando didicissent, inuentum est, eadem hora transitum eius illis ostensum esse per uisionem, qua illam referebant exisse de mundo. Pulchraque rerum concordia procuratum est diuinitus, ut, cum illi exitum eius de hac uita uiderent, tunc isti introitum eius in perpetuam animarum uitam cognoscerent. Distant autem inter se monasteria haec XIII ferme milibus passuum.

Ferunt autem, quod eadem nocte, in ipso quoque monasterio, ubi praefata Dei famula obiit, cuidam uirginum Deo deuotarum, quae illam inmenso amore diligebat, obitus illius in uisione apparuerit, quae animam eius cum angelis ad caelum ire conspexerit, atque hoc ipsa, qua factum est, hora his, quae secum erant, famulis Christi manifeste narrauerit, easque ad orandum pro anima eius, etiam priusquam cetera congregatio eius obitum cognouisset, excitauerit.

Quod ita fuisse factum mox congregationi mane facto innotuit. Erat enim haec ipsa hora cum aliis nonnullis Christi ancillis in extremis monasterii locis seorsum posita, ubi nuper uenientes ad conuersionem feminae solebant probari, donec regulariter institutae in societatem congregationis susciperentur.

Chap. XXIII.

Of the life and death of the Abbess Hilda. [614-680 a.d.]

In the year after this, that is the year of our Lord 680, the most religious handmaid of Christ, Hilda, abbess of the monastery that is called Streanaeshalch, as we mentioned above, after having done many heavenly deeds on earth, passed thence to receive the rewards of the heavenly life, on the 17th of November, at the age of sixty-six years. Her life falls into two equal parts, for the first thirty-three years of it she spent living most nobly in the secular habit; and still more nobly dedicated the remaining half to the Lord in the monastic life. For she was nobly born, being the daughter of Hereric, nephew to King Edwin, and with that king she also received the faith and mysteries of Christ, at the preaching of Paulinus, of blessed memory, the first bishop of the Northumbrians, and preserved the same undefiled till she attained to the vision of our Lord in Heaven.

When she had resolved to quit the secular habit, and to serve Him alone, she withdrew into the province of the East Angles, for she was allied to the king there; being desirous to cross over thence into Gaul, forsaking her native country and all that she had, and so to live a stranger for our Lord's sake in the monastery of Cale, that she might the better attain to the eternal country in heaven. For her sister Heresuid, mother to Aldwulf, king of the East Angles, was at that time living in the same monastery, under regular discipline, waiting for an everlasting crown; and led by her example, she continued a whole year in the aforesaid province, with the design of going abroad; but afterwards, Bishop Aidan recalled her to her home, and she received land to

the extent of one family on the north side of the river Wear; where likewise for a year she led a monastic life, with very few companions.

After this she was made abbess in the monastery called Heruteu, which monastery had been founded, not long before, by the pious handmaid of Christ, Heiu, who is said to have been the first woman in the province of the Northumbrians who took upon her the vows and habit of a nun, being consecrated by Bishop Aidan; but she, soon after she had founded that monastery, retired to the city of Calcaria, which is called Kaelcacaestir by the English, and there fixed her dwelling. Hilda, the handmaid of Christ, being set over that monastery, began immediately to order it in all things under a rule of life, according as she had been instructed by learned men; for Bishop Aidan, and others of the religious that knew her, frequently visited her and loved her heartily, and diligently instructed her, because of her innate wisdom and love of the service of God.

When she had for some years governed this monastery, wholly intent upon establishing a rule of life, it happened that she also undertook either to build or to set in order a monastery in the place called Streanaeshalch, and this work which was laid upon her she industriously performed; for she put this monastery under the same rule of monastic life as the former; and taught there the strict observance of justice, piety, chastity, and other virtues, and particularly of peace and charity; so that, after the example of the primitive Church, no one there was rich, and none poor, for they had all things common, and none had any private property. Her prudence was so great, that not only meaner men in their need, but sometimes even kings and princes, sought and received her counsel; she obliged those who were under her direction to give so much time to reading of the Holy Scriptures, and to exercise themselves so much in works of justice, that many might readily be found there fit for the priesthood and the service of the altar.

Indeed we have seen five from that monastery who afterwards became bishops, and all of them men of singular merit and sanctity, whose names were Bosa, Aetla, Oftfor, John, and Wilfrid. Of the first we have said above that he was consecrated bishop of York; of the second, it may be briefly stated that he was appointed bishop of Dorchester. Of the last two we shall tell hereafter, that the former was ordained bishop of Hagustald, the other of the church of York; of the third, we may here mention that, having applied himself to the reading and observance of the Scriptures in both the monasteries of the Abbess Hilda, at length being desirous to attain to greater perfection, he went into Kent, to Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory; where having spent some time in sacred studies, he resolved to go to Rome also, which, in those days, was esteemed a very salutary undertaking. Returning thence into Britain, he took his way into the province of the Hwiccas, where King Osric then ruled, and continued there a long time, preaching the Word of faith, and showing an example of good life to all that

saw and heard him. At that time, Bosel, the bishop of that province, laboured under such weakness of body, that he could not himself perform episcopal functions; for which reason, Oftfor was, by universal consent, chosen bishop in his stead, and by order of King Ethelred, consecrated by Bishop Wilfrid, of blessed memory, who was then Bishop of the Midland Angles, because Archbishop Theodore was dead, and no other bishop ordained in his place. A little while before, that is, before the election of the aforesaid man of God, Bosel, Tatfrid, a man of great industry and learning, and of excellent ability, had been chosen bishop for that province, from the monastery of the same abbess, but had been snatched away by an untimely death, before he could be ordained.

Thus this handmaid of Christ, the Abbess Hilda, whom all that knew her called Mother, for her singular piety and grace, was not only an example of good life, to those that lived in her monastery, but afforded occasion of amendment and salvation to many who lived at a distance, to whom the blessed fame was brought of her industry and virtue. For it was meet that the dream of her mother, Bregusuid, during her infancy, should be fulfilled. Now Bregusuid, at the time that her husband, Hereric, lived in banishment, under Cerdic, king of the Britons, where he was also poisoned, fancied, in a dream, that he was suddenly taken away from her and she was seeking for him most carefully, but could find no sign of him anywhere. After an anxious search for him, all at once she found a most precious necklace under her garment, and whilst she was looking on it very attentively, it seemed to shine forth with such a blaze of light that it filled all Britain with the glory of its brilliance. This dream was doubtless fulfilled in her daughter that we speak of, whose life was an example of the works of light, not only blessed to herself, but to many who desired to live aright.

When she had governed this monastery many years, it pleased Him Who has made such merciful provision for our salvation, to give her holy soul the trial of a long infirmity of the flesh, to the end that, according to the Apostle's example, her virtue might be made perfect in weakness. Struck down with a fever, she suffered from a burning heat, and was afflicted with the same trouble for six years continually; during all which time she never failed either to return thanks to her Maker, or publicly and privately to instruct the flock committed to her charge; for taught by her own experience she admonished all men to serve the Lord dutifully, when health of body is granted to them, and always to return thanks faithfully to Him in adversity, or bodily infirmity. In the seventh year of her sickness, when the disease turned inwards, her last day came, and about cockcrow, having received the voyage provision of Holy Housel, and called together the handmaids of Christ that were within the same monastery, she admonished them to preserve the peace of the Gospel among themselves, and with all others; and even as she spoke her words of exhortation, she joyfully saw death come, or, in the words of our Lord, passed

from death unto life.

That same night it pleased Almighty God, by a manifest vision, to make known her death in another monastery, at a distance from hers, which she had built that same year, and which is called Hacanos. There was in that monastery, a certain nun called Begu, who, having dedicated her virginity to the Lord, had served Him upwards of thirty years in the monastic life. This nun was resting in the dormitory of the sisters, when on a sudden she heard in the air the well-known sound of the bell, which used to awake and call them to prayers, when any one of them was taken out of this world, and opening her eyes, as she thought, she saw the roof of the house open, and a light shed from above filling all the place. Looking earnestly upon that light, she saw the soul of the aforesaid handmaid of God in that same light, being carried to heaven attended and guided by angels. Then awaking, and seeing the other sisters lying round about her, she perceived that what she had seen had been revealed to her either in a dream or a vision; and rising immediately in great fear, she ran to the virgin who then presided in the monastery in the place of the abbess, and whose name was Frigyth, and, with many tears and lamentations, and heaving deep sighs, told her that the Abbess Hilda, mother of them all, had departed this life, and had in her sight ascended to the gates of eternal light, and to the company of the citizens of heaven, with a great light, and with angels for her guides. Frigyth having heard it, awoke all the sisters, and calling them to the church, admonished them to give themselves to prayer and singing of psalms, for the soul of their mother; which they did earnestly during the remainder of the night; and at break of day, the brothers came with news of her death, from the place where she had died. They answered that they knew it before, and then related in order how and when they had learnt it, by which it appeared that her death had been revealed to them in a vision that same hour in which the brothers said that she had died. Thus by a fair harmony of events Heaven ordained, that when some saw her departure out of this world, the others should have knowledge of her entrance into the eternal life of souls. These monasteries are about thirteen miles distant from each other.

It is also told, that her death was, in a vision, made known the same night to one of the virgins dedicated to God, who loved her with a great love, in the same monastery where the said handmaid of God died. This nun saw her soul ascend to heaven in the company of angels; and this she openly declared, in the very same hour that it happened, to those handmaids of Christ that were with her; and aroused them to pray for her soul, even before the rest of the community had heard of her death. The truth of which was known to the whole community in the morning. This same nun was at that time with some other handmaids of Christ, in the remotest part of the monastery, where the women who had lately entered the monastic life were wont to pass their time of probation, till they were instructed according to rule, and admitted into the

fellowship of the community.

CHAP. 24

In huius monasterio abbatissae fuit frater quidam diuina gratia specialiter insignis, quia carmina religioni et pietati apta facere solebat; ita ut, quicquid ex diuinis litteris per interpretes disceret, hoc ipse post pusillum uerbis poeticis maxima suauitate et conpunctione conpositis, in sua, id est Anglorum, lingua proferret.

Cuius carminibus multorum saepe animi ad contemptum saeculi, et appetitum sunt uitae caelestis accensi. Et quidem et alii post illum in gente Anglorum religiosa poemata facere temtabant; sed nullus eum aequiparare potuit. Namque ipse non ab hominibus, neque per hominem institutus, canendi artem didicit, sed diuinitus adiutus gratis canendi donum accepit. Unde nil umquam friuoli et superuacui poematis facere potuit, sed ea tantummodo, quae ad religionem pertinent, religiosam eius linguam decebant. Siquidem in habitu saeculari usque ad tempora prouectoris aetatis constitutus, nil carminum aliquando didicerat. Unde nonnumquam in conuiuio, cum esset laetitiae causa decretum, ut omnes per ordinem cantare deberent, ille, ubi adpropinquare sibi citharam cernebat, surgebat a media caena, et egressus ad suam domum repedabat.

Quod dum tempore quodam faceret, et relictā domū conuiuii egressus esset ad stabula iumentorum, quorum ei custodia nocte illa erat delegata, ibique hora conpetenti membra dedisset sopori, adstitit ei quidam per somnium, eumque salutans, ac suo appellans nomine: ‘Caedmon,’ inquit, ‘canta mihi aliquid.’ At ille respondens: ‘Nescio,’ inquit, ‘cantare; nam et ideo de conuiuio egressus huc secessi, quia cantare non poteram.’ Rursum ille, qui cum eo loquebatur, ‘Attamen,’ ait, ‘mihi cantare habes.’ ‘Quid,’

inquit, ‘debeo cantare?’ Et ille, ‘Canta,’ inquit, ‘principium creaturarum.’ Quo accepto responso, statim ipse coepit cantare in laudem Dei conditoris uersus, quos numquam audierat, quorum iste est sensus: ‘Nunc laudare debemus auctorem regni caelestis, potentiam Creatoris et consilium illius, facta Patris gloriae. Quomodo ille, cum sit aeternus Deus, omnium miraculorum auctor extitit, qui primo filiis hominum caelum pro culmine tecti, dehinc terram custos humani generis omnipotens creauit.’ Hic est sensus, non autem ordo ipse uerborum, quae dormiens ille canebat; neque enim possunt carmina, quamuis optime conposita, ex alia in aliam linguam ad uerbum sine detrimento sui decoris ac dignitatis transferri. Exsurgens autem a somno, cuncta, quae dormiens cantauerat, memoriter retinuit, et eis mox plura in eundem modum uerba Deo digni carminis adiunxit.

Ueniensque mane ad uilicū, qui sibi praeerat, quid doni percepisset, indicauit, atque ad abbatissam perductus, iussus est, multis doctioribus uiris praesentibus, indicare somnium, et dicere carmen, ut uniuersorum iudicio, quid uel unde esset, quod referebat, probaretur. Uisumque est omnibus caelestem ei

a Domino concessam esse gratiam. Exponebantque illi quendam sacrae historiae siue doctrinae sermonem, praecipientes eum, si posset, hunc in modulationem carminis transferre. At ille suscepto negotio abiit, et mane rediens, optimo carmine, quod iubebatur, compositum reddidit.

Unde mox abbatissa amplexata gratiam Dei in uiro, saecularem illum habitum relinquere, et monachicum suscipere propositum docuit, susceptumque in monasterium cum omnibus suis fratrum cohorti adsociauit, iussitque illum seriem sacrae historiae doceri. At ipse cuncta, quae audiendo discere poterat, rememorando secum, et quasi mundum animal ruminando, in carmen dulcissimum conuertebat, suauiusque resonando doctores suos uicissim auditores sui faciebat.

Canebat autem de creatione mundi, et origine humani generis, et tota genesis historia, de egressu Israel ex Aegypto, et ingressu in terram repromissionis, de aliis plurimis sacrae scripturae historiis, de incarnatione dominica, passione, resurrectione, et ascensione in caelum, de Spiritus Sancti aduentu, et apostolorum doctrina. Item de terrore futuri iudicii, et horrore poenae gehennalis, ac dulcedine regni caelestis multa carmina faciebat; sed et alia perplura de beneficiis et iudiciis diuinis, in quibus cunctis homines ab amore scelerum abstrahere, ad dilectionem uero et solertiam bonae actionis excitare curabat. Erat enim uir multum religiosus, et regularibus disciplinis humiliter subditus; aduersum uero illos, qui aliter facere uolebant, zelo magni feruoris accensus; unde et pulchro uitam suam fine conclusit.

Nam propinquantem hora sui decessus, XIII diebus praeueniente corporea infirmitate pressus est, adeo tamen moderate, ut et loqui toto eo tempore posset, et ingredi. Erat autem in proximo casa, in qua infirmiores et qui prope morituri esse uidebantur, induci solebant. Rogauit ergo ministrum suum uespere incumbente, nocte qua de saeculo erat exiturus, ut in ea sibi locum quiescendi praepararet; qui miratus, cur hoc rogaret, qui nequaquam adhuc moriturus esse uidebatur, fecit tamen, quod dixerat. Cumque ibidem positi uicissim aliqua gaudente animo, una cum eis, qui ibidem ante inerant, loquerentur ac iocarentur, et iam mediae noctis tempus esset transcensum, interrogauit, si eucharistiam intus haberent.

Respondebant: 'Quid opus est eucharistia? neque enim mori adhuc habes, qui tam hilariter nobiscum uelut sospes loqueris.' Rursus ille: 'Et tamen,' ait, 'afferte mihi eucharistiam.' Qua accepta in manu, interrogauit, si omnes placidum erga se animum, et sine querela controuersiae ac rancoris haberent. Respondebant omnes placidissimam se mentem ad illum, et ab omni ira remotam habere, eumque uicissim rogabant placidam erga ipsos mentem habere. Qui confestim respondit: 'Placidam ego mentem, filioli, erga omnes Dei famulos gero.' Sicque se caelesti muniens uiatico, uitae alterius ingressui parauit; et interrogauit, quam prope esset hora, qua fratres ad dicendas Domino laudes nocturnas excitari deberent.

Respondabant: 'Non longe est.' At ille: 'Bene, ergo expectemus horam illam.' Et signans se signo sanctae crucis reclinavit caput ad ceruicem, modicumque obdormiens ita cum silentio uitam finiuit.

Sicque factum est, ut, quomodo simplici ac pura mente tranquillaque deuotione Domino seruierat, ita etiam tranquilla morte mundum relinquens ad eius uisionem ueniret, illaque lingua, quae tot salutaria uerba in laudem Conditoris conposuerat, ultima quoque uerba in laudem ipsius, signando sese, et spiritum suum in manus eius commendando clauderet; qui etiam praescius sui obitus extitisse ex his, quae narrauimus, uidetur.

Chap. XXIV.

That there was in her monastery a brother, on whom the gift of song was bestowed by Heaven.^[680 a.d.]

There was in the monastery of this abbess a certain brother, marked in a special manner by the grace of God, for he was wont to make songs of piety and religion, so that whatever was expounded to him out of Scripture, he turned ere long into verse expressive of much sweetness and penitence, in English, which was his native language. By his songs the minds of many were often fired with contempt of the world, and desire of the heavenly life. Others of the English nation after him attempted to compose religious poems, but none could equal him, for he did not learn the art of poetry from men, neither was he taught by man, but by God's grace he received the free gift of song, for which reason he never could compose any trivial or vain poem, but only those which concern religion it behoved his religious tongue to utter. For having lived in the secular habit till he was well advanced in years, he had never learned anything of versifying; and for this reason sometimes at a banquet, when it was agreed to make merry by singing in turn, if he saw the harp come towards him, he would rise up from table and go out and return home.

Once having done so and gone out of the house where the banquet was, to the stable, where he had to take care of the cattle that night, he there composed himself to rest at the proper time. Thereupon one stood by him in his sleep, and saluting him, and calling him by his name, said, "Cædmon, sing me something." But he answered, "I cannot sing, and for this cause I left the banquet and retired hither, because I could not sing." Then he who talked to him replied, "Nevertheless thou must needs sing to me." "What must I sing?" he asked. "Sing the beginning of creation," said the other. Having received this answer he straightway began to sing verses to the praise of God the Creator, which he had never heard, the purport whereof was after this manner: "Now must we praise the Maker of the heavenly kingdom, the power of the Creator and His counsel, the deeds of the Father of glory. How He, being the eternal God, became the Author of all wondrous works, Who being the

Almighty Guardian of the human race, first created heaven for the sons of men to be the covering of their dwelling place, and next the earth.” This is the sense but not the order of the words as he sang them in his sleep; for verses, though never so well composed, cannot be literally translated out of one language into another without loss of their beauty and loftiness. Awaking from his sleep, he remembered all that he had sung in his dream, and soon added more after the same manner, in words which worthily expressed the praise of God.

In the morning he came to the reeve who was over him, and having told him of the gift he had received, was conducted to the abbess, and bidden, in the presence of many learned men, to tell his dream, and repeat the verses, that they might all examine and give their judgement upon the nature and origin of the gift whereof he spoke. And they all judged that heavenly grace had been granted to him by the Lord. They expounded to him a passage of sacred history or doctrine, enjoining upon him, if he could, to put it into verse. Having undertaken this task, he went away, and returning the next morning, gave them the passage he had been bidden to translate, rendered in most excellent verse. Whereupon the abbess, joyfully recognizing the grace of God in the man, instructed him to quit the secular habit, and take upon him monastic vows; and having received him into the monastery, she and all her people admitted him to the company of the brethren, and ordered that he should be taught the whole course of sacred history. So he, giving ear to all that he could learn, and bearing it in mind, and as it were ruminating, like a clean animal, turned it into most harmonious verse; and sweetly singing it, made his masters in their turn his hearers. He sang the creation of the world, the origin of man, and all the history of Genesis, the departure of the children of Israel out of Egypt, their entrance into the promised land, and many other histories from Holy Scripture; the Incarnation, Passion, Resurrection of our Lord, and His Ascension into heaven; the coming of the Holy Ghost, and the teaching of the Apostles; likewise he made many songs concerning the terror of future judgement, the horror of the pains of hell, and the joys of heaven; besides many more about the blessings and the judgements of God, by all of which he endeavoured to draw men away from the love of sin, and to excite in them devotion to well-doing and perseverance therein. For he was a very religious man, humbly submissive to the discipline of monastic rule, but inflamed with fervent zeal against those who chose to do otherwise; for which reason he made a fair ending of his life.

For when the hour of his departure drew near, it was preceded by a bodily infirmity under which he laboured for the space of fourteen days, yet it was of so mild a nature that he could talk and go about the whole time. In his neighbourhood was the house to which those that were sick, and like to die, were wont to be carried. He desired the person that ministered to him, as the evening came on of the night in which he was to depart this life, to make

ready a place there for him to take his rest. The man, wondering why he should desire it, because there was as yet no sign of his approaching death, nevertheless did his bidding. When they had lain down there, and had been conversing happily and pleasantly for some time with those that were in the house before, and it was now past midnight, he asked them, whether they had the Eucharist within? They answered, "What need of the Eucharist? for you are not yet appointed to die, since you talk so merrily with us, as if you were in good health." "Nevertheless," said he, "bring me the Eucharist." Having received It into his hand, he asked, whether they were all in charity with him, and had no complaint against him, nor any quarrel or grudge. They answered, that they were all in perfect charity with him, and free from all anger; and in their turn they asked him to be of the same mind towards them. He answered at once, "I am in charity, my children, with all the servants of God." Then strengthening himself with the heavenly Viaticum, he prepared for the entrance into another life, and asked how near the time was when the brothers should be awakened to sing the nightly praises of the Lord? They answered, "It is not far off." Then he said, "It is well, let us await that hour;" and signing himself with the sign of the Holy Cross, he laid his head on the pillow, and falling into a slumber for a little while, so ended his life in silence.

Thus it came to pass, that as he had served the Lord with a simple and pure mind, and quiet devotion, so he now departed to behold His Presence, leaving the world by a quiet death; and that tongue, which had uttered so many wholesome words in praise of the Creator, spake its last words also in His praise, while he signed himself with the Cross, and commended his spirit into His hands; and by what has been here said, he seems to have had foreknowledge of his death.

CHAP. 25

His temporibus monasterium uirginum, quod Coludi Urbem cognominant, cuius et supra meminimus, per culpam incuriae flammis absumtum est. Quod tamen a malitia inhabitantium in eo, et praecipue illorum, qui maiores esse uidebantur, contigisse, omnes, qui nouere, facillime potuerunt aduertere. Sed non defuit puniendis admonitio diuinae pietatis, qua correcti per ieiunia, fletus, et preces iram a se, instar Nineuitarum, iusti Iudicis auerterent.

Erat namque in eodem monasterio uir de genere Scottorum, Adamnanus uocabulo, ducens uitam in continentia et orationibus multum Deo deuotam, ita ut nil umquam cibi uel potus, excepta die dominica et quinta sabbati, perciperet, saepe autem noctes integras peruigil in oratione transigeret. Quae quidem illi districtio uitae artioris, primo ex necessitate emendandae suae prauitatis obuenerat, sed procedente tempore necessitatem in consuetudinem uerterat.

Siquidem in adolescentia sua sceleris aliquid commiserat, quod commissum, ubi ad cor suum rediit, grauissime exhorruit, et se pro illo puniendum a districto Iudice timebat. Accedens ergo ad sacerdotem, a quo sibi sperabat iter salutis posse demonstrari, confessus est reatum suum, petiitque, ut consilium sibi daret, quo posset fugere a uentura ira. Qui audito eius commisso dixit: ‘Grande uulnus grandioris curam medellae desiderat; et ideo ieiuniis, psalmis, et orationibus, quantum uales, insiste, quo praeoccupando faciem Domini in confessione propitium eum inuenire merearis.’ At ille, quem nimius reae conscientiae tenebat dolor, et internis peccatorum uinculis, quibus grauabatur, ocus desiderabat absolui: ‘Adulescentior,’ inquit, ‘sum aetate, et uegetus corpore; quicquid mihi inposueris agendum, dummodo saluus fiam in die Domini, totum facile feram, etiam si totam noctem stando in precibus peragere, si integram septimanam iubeas abstinendo transigere.’ Qui dixit: ‘Multum est, ut tota septimana absque alimento corporis perdures; sed biduanum uel triduanum sat est obseruare ieiunium. Hoc facito, donec post modicum tempus rediens ad te, quid facere debeas, et quamdiu paenitentiae insistere tibi plenius ostendam.’ Quibus dictis, et descripta illi mensura paenitendi, abiit sacerdos, et ingruente causa subita secessit Hiberniam, unde originem duxerat, neque ultra ad eum iuxta suum conductum rediit. At ipse memor praecepti eius, simul et promissi sui, totum se lacrimis paenitentiae, uigiliis sanctis, et continentiae mancipauit; ita ut quinta solum sabbati et dominica, sicut praedixi, reficeret, ceteris septimanae diebus ieiunus permaneret. Cumque sacerdotem suum Hiberniam secessisse, ibique defunctum esse audisset, semper ex eo tempore, iuxta conductum eius memoratum, continentiae modum obseruabat; et, quod causa diuini timoris semel ob reatum compunctus coeperat, iam causa diuini amoris delectatus praemiis indefessus agebat.

Quod dum multo tempore sedulus exsequeretur, contigit, eum die quadam de monasterio illo longius egressum, comitante secum uno de fratribus, peracto itinere redire. Qui cum monasterio propinquant, et aedificia illius sublimiter erecta aspicerent, solutus est in lacrimas uir Dei, et tristitiam cordis uultu indice prodebat. Quod intuens comes, quare faceret, inquisiuit. At ille: ‘Cuncta,’

inquit, ‘haec, quae cernis, aedificia publica uel priuata, in proximo est, ut ignis absumens in cinerem conuertat.’ Quod ille audiens, mox ut intrauerunt monasterium, matri congregationis, uocabulo Aebba¹, curauit indicare. At illa merito turbata de tali praesagio uocauit ad se uirum, et diligentius ab eo rem, uel unde hoc ipse nosset, inquirebat. Qui ait: ‘Nuper occupatus noctu uigiliis et psalmis, uidi adstantem mihi subito quendam incogniti uultus; cuius praesentia cum essem exterritus, dixit mihi, ne timerem; et quasi familiari me uoce alloquens, ‘Bene facis,’

inquit, ‘qui tempore isto nocturnae quietis non somno indulgere, sed uigiliis et orationibus insistere maluisti.’ At ego: ‘Noui,’

inquit, ‘multum mihi esse necesse uigiliis salutaribus insistere, et pro meis erratibus sedulo Dominum deprecari.’ Qui adiciens ‘Uerum,’

inquit, ‘dicas, quia et tibi et multis opus est peccata sua bonis operibus redimere, et, cum cessant a laboribus rerum temporalium, tunc pro appetitu aeternorum bonorum liberius laborare; sed hoc tamen paucissimi faciunt. Siquidem modo totum hoc monasterium ex ordine perlustrans, singulorum casas ac lectos inspexi, et neminem ex omnibus praeter te erga sanitatem animae suae occupatum repperi;

sed omnes prorsus, et uiri et feminae, aut somno torpent inertes, aut ad peccata uigilant. Nam et domunculae, quae ad orandum uel legendum factae erant, nunc in comessionum, potationum, fabulationum, et ceterarum sunt inlecebrarum cubilia conuersae, uirgines quoque Deo dicatae, contempta reuerentia suae professionis, quotiescumque uacant, texendis subtilioribus indumentis operam dant, quibus aut se ipsas ad uicem sponsarum in periculum sui status adornent, aut externorum sibi uirorum amicitiam conparent. Unde merito loco huic et habitatoribus eius grauis de caelo uindicta flammis saeuientibus praeparata est.’ Dixit autem abbatisa: ‘Et quare non citius hoc conpertum mihi reuelare uoluisti?’ Qui respondit: ‘Timui propter reuerentiam tuam, ne forte nimium conturbareris; et tamen hanc consolationem habeas, quod in diebus tuis haec plaga non superueniet.’ Qua diuulgata uisione, aliquantulum loci accolae paucis diebus timere, et se ipsos intermissis facinoribus castigare coeperunt. Uerum post obitum ipsius abbatisae redierunt ad pristinas sordes, immo sceleratiora fecerunt. Et cum dicerent, ‘Pax et securitas,’ extemplo praefatae ultionis sunt poena multati.

Quae mihi cuncta sic esse facta reuerentissimus meus conpresbyter Aedgils referebat, qui tunc in illo monasterio degebat. Postea autem, discedentibus

inde ob desolationem plurimis incolarum, in nostro monasterio plurimo tempore conuersatus, ibidemque defunctus est. Haec ideo nostrae historiae inserenda credidimus, ut admoneremus lectorem operum Domini, quam terribilis in consiliis super filios hominum; ne forte nos tempore aliquo carnis inlecebris seruientes, minusque Dei iudicium formidantes, repentina eius ira corripiat, et uel temporalibus damnis iuste saeuens affligat, uel ad perpetuam perditionem districtius examinans tollat.

Chap. XXV.

Of the vision that appeared to a certain man of God before the monastery of the city Coludi was burned down.

At this time, the monastery of virgins, called the city of Coludi, above-mentioned, was burned down, through carelessness; and yet all that knew it might have been aware that it happened by reason of the wickedness of those who dwelt in it, and chiefly of those who seemed to be the greatest. But there wanted not a warning of the approaching punishment from the Divine mercy whereby they might have been led to amend their ways, and by fasting and tears and prayers, like the Ninevites, have averted the anger of the just Judge.

For there was in that monastery a man of the Scottish race, called Adamnan, leading a life entirely devoted to God in continence and prayer, insomuch that he never took any food or drink, except only on Sundays and Thursdays; and often spent whole nights in watching and prayer. This strictness in austerity of life he had first adopted from the necessity of correcting the evil that was in him; but in process of time the necessity became a custom.

For in his youth he had been guilty of some sin for which, when he came to himself, he conceived a great horror, and dreaded lest he should be punished for the same by the righteous Judge. Betaking himself, therefore, to a priest, who, he hoped, might show him the way of salvation, he confessed his guilt, and desired to be advised how he might escape the wrath to come. The priest having heard his offence, said, "A great wound requires greater care in the healing thereof; wherefore give yourself as far as you are able to fasting and psalms, and prayer, to the end that thus coming before the presence of the Lord in confession," you may find Him merciful. But he, being oppressed with great grief by reason of his guilty conscience, and desiring to be the sooner loosed from the inward fetters of sin, which lay heavy upon him, answered, "I am still young in years and strong of body, and shall, therefore, easily bear all whatsoever you shall enjoin me to do, if so be that I may be saved in the day of the Lord, even though you should bid me spend the whole night standing in prayer, and pass the whole week in abstinence." The priest replied, "It is much for you to continue for a whole week without bodily sustenance; it is enough to observe a fast for two or three days; do this till I

come again to you in a short time, when I will more fully show you what you ought to do, and how long to persevere in your penance.” Having so said, and prescribed the measure of his penance, the priest went away, and upon some sudden occasion passed over into Ireland, which was his native country, and returned no more to him, as he had appointed. But the man remembering this injunction and his own promise, gave himself up entirely to tears of penitence, holy vigils and continence; so that he only took food on Thursdays and Sundays, as has been said; and continued fasting all the other days of the week. When he heard that his priest had gone to Ireland, and had died there, he ever after observed this manner of abstinence, which had been appointed for him as we have said; and as he had begun that course through the fear of God, in penitence for his guilt, so he still continued the same unremittingly for the love of God, and through delight in its rewards.

Having practised this carefully for a long time, it happened that he had gone on a certain day to a distance from the monastery, accompanied by one of the brothers; and as they were returning from this journey, when they drew near to the monastery, and beheld its lofty buildings, the man of God burst into tears, and his countenance discovered the trouble of his heart. His companion, perceiving it, asked what was the reason, to which he answered: “The time is at hand when a devouring fire shall reduce to ashes all the buildings which you here behold, both public and private.” The other, hearing these words, when they presently came into the monastery, told them to Aebba, the mother of the community. She with good cause being much troubled at that prediction, called the man to her, and straitly questioned him concerning the matter and how he came to know it. He answered, “Being engaged one night lately in watching and singing psalms, on a sudden I saw one standing by me whose countenance I did not know, and I was startled at his presence, but he bade me not to fear, and speaking to me like a friend he said, ‘You do well in that you have chosen rather at this time of rest not to give yourself up to sleep, but to continue in watching and prayer.’ I answered, ‘I know I have great need to continue in wholesome watching and earnest prayer to the Lord to pardon my transgressions.’ He replied, ‘You speak truly, for you and many more have need to redeem their sins by good works, and when they cease from temporal labours, then to labour the more eagerly for desire of eternal blessings; but this very few do; for I, having now gone through all this monastery in order, have looked into the huts and beds of all, and found none of them except yourself busy about the health of his soul; but all of them, both men and women, are either sunk in slothful sleep, or are awake in order to commit sin; for even the cells that were built for prayer or reading, are now converted into places of feasting, drinking, talking, and other delights; the very virgins dedicated to God, laying aside the respect due to their profession, whensoever they are at leisure, apply themselves to weaving fine garments, wherewith to adorn themselves like brides, to the danger of their state, or to gain the friendship of strange men; for which reason, as is

meet, a heavy judgement from Heaven with raging fire is ready to fall on this place and those that dwell therein.’” The abbess said, “Why did you not sooner reveal to me what you knew?” He answered, “I was afraid to do it, out of respect to you, lest you should be too much afflicted; yet you may have this comfort, that the blow will not fall in your days.” This vision being made known, the inhabitants of that place were for a few days in some little fear, and leaving off their sins, began to do penance; but after the death of the abbess they returned to their former defilement, nay, they committed worse sins; and when they said “Peace and safety,” the doom of the aforesaid judgement came suddenly upon them.

That all this fell out after this manner, was told me by my most reverend fellow-priest, Aedgils, who then lived in that monastery. Afterwards, when many of the inhabitants had departed thence, on account of the destruction, he lived a long time in our monastery, and died there. We have thought fit to insert this in our History, to admonish the reader of the works of the Lord, how terrible He is in His doing toward the children of men, lest haply we should at some time or other yield to the snares of the flesh, and dreading too little the judgement of God, fall under His sudden wrath, and either in His righteous anger be brought low with temporal losses, or else be more strictly tried and snatched away to eternal perdition.

CHAP. 26

Anno dominicae incarnationis DCLXXXIII. Ecgfrid rex Nordanhymbrorum, misso Hiberniam cum exercitu duce Bercto, uastauit misere gentem innoxiam, et nationi Anglorum semper amicissimam, ita ut ne ecclesiis quidem aut monasteriis manus parceret hostilis. At insulani et, quantum ualuerunt, armis arma repellebant, et inuocantes diuinae auxilium pietatis, caelitus se uindicari continuis diu inprecationibus postulabant. Et quamuis maledici regnum Dei possidere non possint, creditum est tamen, quod hi, qui merito impietatis suae maledicebantur, ocius Domino uindice poenas sui reatus luerent. Siquidem anno post hunc proximo idem rex, cum temere exercitum ad uastandam Pictorum prouinciam duxisset, multum prohibentibus amicis, et maxime beatae memoriae Cudbercto, qui nuper fuerat ordinatus episcopus, introductus est, simulantibus fugam hostibus, in angustias inaccessorum montium, et cum maxima parte copiarum, quas secum adduxerat, extinctus anno aetatis suae XL.,

regni autem XV., die XIII. Kalendarum Iuniarum. Et quidem, ut dixi, prohibuerunt amici, ne hoc bellum iniret; sed, quoniam anno praecedente noluerat audire reuerentissimum patrem Ecgbertum, ne Scottiam nil se ledentem impugnaret, datum est illi ex poena peccati illius, ne nunc eos, qui ipsum ab interitu reuocare cupiebant, audiret.

Ex quo tempore spes coepit et uirtus regni Anglorum ‘fluere ac retro sublapsa referri.’ Nam et Picti terram possessionis suae, quam tenuerunt Angli; et Scotti, qui erant in Britannia; Brettonum quoque pars nonnulla libertatem receperunt; quam et hactenus habent per annos circiter XLVI; ubi inter plurimos gentis Anglorum, uel interemtis gladio, uel seruitio addictos, uel de terra Pictorum fuga lapsos, etiam reuerentissimus uir Domini Trumuini, qui in eos episcopatum acceperat, recessit cum suis, qui erant in monasterio Aebbercurnig, posito quidem in regione Anglorum, sed in uicinia freti, quod Anglorum terras Pictorumque disternat; eosque, ubicumque poterat, amicis per monasteria commendans, ipse in saepedicto famulorum famularumque Dei monasterio, quod uocatur Streanshalch, locum mansionis elegit; ibique cum paucis suorum in monachica districtione uitam non sibi solummodo, sed et multis utilem, plurimo annorum tempore duxit; ubi etiam defunctus, in ecclesia beati Petri apostoli iuxta honorem et uitam et gradu eius condignum conditus est. Praeerat quidem tunc eidem monasterio regia uirgo Aelbflæd, una cum matre Eanfledæ, quarum supra fecimus mentionem. Sed, adueniente illuc episcopo, maximum regendi auxilium, simul et suae uitae solacium deuota Deo doctrix inuenit. Successit autem Ecgfrido in regnum Aldfrid, uir in scripturis doctissimus, qui frater eius et filius Osui regis esse dicebatur; destructumque regni statum, quamuis intra fines angustiores, nobiliter recuperauit.

Quo uidelicet anno, qui est ab incarnatione dominica DCLXXXV.,

Hlothari Cantuariorum rex, cum post Ecgberctum fratrem suum, qui VIII annis regnauerat, ipse XII annis regnasset, mortuus erat VIII.

Idus Februarias. Uulneratus namque est in pugna Australium Saxonum, quos contra eum Edric filius Ecgbercti adgregarat, et inter medendum defunctus. Ac post eum idem Edric anno uno ac dimidio regnauit; quo defuncto, regnum illud aliquod temporis spatium reges dubii uel externi disperdiderunt; donec legitimus rex Uictred, id est filius Ecgbercti, confortatus in regno, religione simul et industria gentem suam ab extranea inuasionem liberaret.

Chap. XXVI.

Of the death of the Kings Egfrid and Hlothere. [684-685 a.d.]

In the year of our Lord 684, Egfrid, king of the Northumbrians, sending his general, Berct, with an army into Ireland, miserably laid waste that unoffending nation, which had always been most friendly to the English; insomuch that the invading force spared not even the churches or monasteries. But the islanders, while to the utmost of their power they repelled force with force, implored the assistance of the Divine mercy, and with constant imprecations invoked the vengeance of Heaven; and though such as curse cannot inherit the kingdom of God, yet it was believed, that those who were justly cursed on account of their impiety, soon suffered the penalty of their guilt at the avenging hand of God. For the very next year, when that same king had rashly led his army to ravage the province of the Picts, greatly against the advice of his friends, and particularly of Cuthbert, of blessed memory, who had been lately ordained bishop, the enemy made a feigned retreat, and the king was drawn into a narrow pass among remote mountains, and slain, with the greater part of the forces he had led thither, on the 20th of May, in the fortieth year of his age, and the fifteenth of his reign. His friends, as has been said, advised him not to engage in this war; but since he had the year before refused to listen to the most reverend father, Egbert, advising him not to attack the Scots, who were doing him no harm, it was laid upon him as a punishment for his sin, that he should now not listen to those who would have prevented his death.

From that time the hopes and strength of the Anglian kingdom “began to ebb and fall away;” for the Picts recovered their own lands, which had been held by the English, and so did also the Scots that were in Britain; and some of the Britons regained their liberty, which they have now enjoyed for about forty-six years. Among the many English that then either fell by the sword, or were made slaves, or escaped by flight out of the country of the Picts, the most reverend man of God, Trumwine, who had been made bishop over them, withdrew with his people that were in the monastery of Aebbercurnig, in the

country of the English, but close by the arm of the sea which is the boundary between the lands of the English and the Picts. Having commended his followers, wheresoever he could, to his friends in the monasteries, he chose his own place of abode in the monastery, which we have so often mentioned, of servants and handmaids of God, at Streanaeshalch; and there for many years, with a few of his own brethren, he led a life in all monastic austerity, not only to his own benefit, but to the benefit of many others, and dying there, he was buried in the church of the blessed Peter the Apostle, with the honour due to his life and rank. The royal virgin, Elfled, with her mother, Eanfled, whom we have mentioned before, then presided over that monastery; but when the bishop came thither, that devout teacher found in him the greatest help in governing, and comfort in her private life. Aldfrid succeeded Egfrid in the throne, being a man most learned in the Scriptures, said to be brother to Egfrid, and son to King Oswy; he nobly retrieved the ruined state of the kingdom, though within narrower bounds.

The same year, being the 685th from the Incarnation of our Lord, Hlothre, king of Kent, died on the 6th of February, when he had reigned twelve years after his brother Egbert, who had reigned nine years: he was wounded in battle with the South Saxons, whom Edric, the son of Egbert, had raised against him, and died whilst his wound was being dressed. After him, this same Edric reigned a year and a half. On his death, kings of doubtful title, or of foreign origin, for some time wasted the kingdom, till the lawful king, Wictred, the son of Egbert, being settled in the throne, by his piety and zeal delivered his nation from foreign invasion.

CHAP. 27

Ipsa etiam anno, quo finem uitae accepit rex Ecgrid, episcopum, ut diximus, fecerat ordinari Lindisfarnensium ecclesiae uirum sanctum et uenerabilem Cudbertum, qui in insula permodica, quae appellatur Farne, et ab eadem ecclesia nouem ferme milibus passuum in Oceano procul abest, uitam solitariam per annos plures in magna corporis et mentis continentia duxerat. Qui quidem a prima aetate pueritiae studio religiosae uitae semper ardebat, sed ab ineunte adulescentia monachicum et nomen adsumsit, et habitum.

Intrauit autem primo monasterium Mailros, quod in ripa Tuidi fluminis positum tunc abbas Eata, uir omnium mansuetissimus ac simplicissimus, regebat, qui postea episcopus Hagustaldensis siue Lindisfarnensis ecclesiae factus est, ut supra memorauimus; cui tempore illo propositus Boisil magnarum uirtutum et prophetici spiritus sacerdos fuit. Huius discipulatu Cudbert humiliter subditus, et scientiam ab eo scripturarum, et bonorum operum sumsit exempla.

Qui postquam migrauit ad Dominum, Cudbert eidem monasterio factus propositus, plures et auctoritate magistri, et exemplo suae actionis regularem instituebat ad uitam. Nec solum ipsi monasterio regularis uitae monita, simul et exempla praebebat, sed et uulgus circumpositum longe lateque a uita stultae consuetudinis ad caelestium gaudiorum conuertere curabat amorem. Nam et multi fidem, quam habebant, iniquis profanabant operibus; et aliqui etiam tempore mortalitatis, neglectis fidei sacramentis, quibus erant inbuti, ad erratica idolatriae medicamina concurrebant; quasi missam a Deo conditore plagam per incantationes uel fylacteria uel alia quaelibet daemonicae artis arcana cohibere ualerent. Ad utrorumque ergo corrigendum errorem, crebro ipse de monasterio egressus, aliquoties equo sedens, sed saepius pedes incedens, circumpositas ueniebat ad uillas, et uiam ueritatis praedicabat errantibus; quod ipsum etiam Boisil suo tempore facere consueuerat. Erat quippe moris eo tempore populis Anglorum, ut ueniente in uillam clerico uel presbytero, cuncti ad eius imperium uerbum audituri confluerent; libenter ea, quae dicerentur, audirent; libentius, quae audire et intellegere poterant, operando sequerentur. Porro Cudberto tanta erat dicendi peritia, tantus amor persuadendi, quae coeperat, tale uultus angelici lumen, ut nullus praesentium latebras ei sui cordis celare praesumeret; omnes palam, quae gesserant, confitendo proferrent, quia nimirum haec eadem illum latere nullo modo putabant; et confessa dignis, ut imperabat, poenitentiae fructibus abstergerent.

Solebat autem ea maxime loca peragraré, illis praedicare in uiculis, qui in arduis asperisque montibus procul positi aliis horrore erant ad uisendum, et paupertate pariter ac rusticitate sua doctorum arcebant accessum. Quos tamen ille pio libenter mancipatus labori, tanta doctrinae solertis excolebat industria,

ut de monasterio egressus, saepe ebdomade integra, aliquando duabus uel tribus, nonnumquam etiam mense pleno domum non rediret; sed demoratus in montanis, plebem rusticam uerbo praedicationis simul et opere uirtutis ad caelestia uocaret.

Cum ergo uenerabilis Domini famulus multos in Mailronensi monasterio degens annos magnis uirtutum signis effulgeret, transtulit eum reuerentissimus abbas ipsius Eata ad insulam Lindisfarnensium, ut ibi quoque fratribus custodiam disciplinae regularis et auctoritate propositi intimaret et propria actione praemonstraret. Nam et ipsum locum tunc idem reuerentissimus pater abbatis iure regebat. Siquidem a temporibus ibidem antiquis, et episcopus cum clero, et abbas solebat manere cum monachis; qui tamen et ipsi ad curam episcopi familiariter pertinerent. Quia nimirum Aidan, qui primus eius loci episcopus fuit, cum monachis illuc et ipse monachus adueniens monachicam in eo conuersionem instituit; quomodo et prius beatus pater Augustinus in Cantia fecisse noscitur, scribente ei reuerentissimo papa Gregorio, quod et supra posuimus. ‘Sed quia tua fraternitas,’ inquit, ‘monasterii regulis erudita seorsum fieri non debet a clericis suis, in ecclesia Anglorum, quae nuper auctore Deo ad fidem perducta est, hanc debet conuersionem instituere, quae initio nascentis ecclesiae fuit patribus nostris; in quibus nullus eorum ex his, quae possidebant, aliquid suum esse dicebat, sed erant eis omnia communia.’

Chap. XXVII.

How Cuthbert, a man of God, was made bishop; and how he lived and taught whilst still in the monastic life. [685 a.d.]

In the same year in which King Egfrid departed this life, he, as has been said, caused the holy and venerable Cuthbert to be ordained bishop of the church of Lindisfarne. He had for many years led a solitary life, in great continence of body and mind, in a very small island, called Farne, in the ocean about nine miles distant from that same church. From his earliest childhood he had always been inflamed with the desire of a religious life; and he adopted the name and habit of a monk when he was quite a young man: he first entered the monastery of Mailros, which is on the bank of the river Tweed, and was then governed by the Abbot Eata, a man of great gentleness and simplicity, who was afterward made bishop of the church of Hagustald or Lindisfarne, as has been said above. The provost of the monastery at that time was Boisil, a priest of great virtue and of a prophetic spirit. Cuthbert, humbly submitting himself to this man’s direction, from him received both a knowledge of the Scriptures, and an example of good works.

After he had departed to the Lord, Cuthbert became provost of that monastery, where he instructed many in the rule of monastic life, both by the authority of a master, and the example of his own behaviour. Nor did he bestow his teaching and his example in the monastic life on his monastery

alone, but laboured far and wide to convert the people dwelling round about from the life of foolish custom, to the love of heavenly joys; for many profaned the faith which they held by their wicked actions; and some also, in the time of a pestilence, neglecting the mysteries of the faith which they had received, had recourse to the false remedies of idolatry, as if they could have put a stop to the plague sent from God, by incantations, amulets, or any other secrets of the Devil's art. In order to correct the error of both sorts, he often went forth from the monastery, sometimes on horseback, but oftener on foot, and went to the neighbouring townships, where he preached the way of truth to such as had gone astray; which Boisil also in his time had been wont to do. It was then the custom of the English people, that when a clerk or priest came to a township, they all, at his summons, flocked together to hear the Word; willingly heard what was said, and still more willingly practised those things that they could hear and understand. And such was Cuthbert's skill in speaking, so keen his desire to persuade men of what he taught, such a light shone in his angelic face, that no man present dared to conceal from him the secrets of his heart, but all openly revealed in confession what they had done, thinking doubtless that their guilt could in nowise be hidden from him; and having confessed their sins, they wiped them out by fruits worthy of repentance, as he bade them. He was wont chiefly to resort to those places and preach in those villages which were situated afar off amid steep and wild mountains, so that others dreaded to go thither, and whereof the poverty and barbarity rendered them inaccessible to other teachers. But he, devoting himself entirely to that pious labour, so industriously ministered to them with his wise teaching, that when he went forth from the monastery, he would often stay a whole week, sometimes two or three, or even sometimes a full month, before he returned home, continuing among the hill folk to call that simple people by his preaching and good works to the things of Heaven.

This venerable servant of the Lord, having thus spent many years in the monastery of Mailros, and there become conspicuous by great tokens of virtue, his most reverend abbot, Eata, removed him to the isle of Lindisfarne, that he might there also, by his authority as provost and by the example of his own practice, instruct the brethren in the observance of regular discipline; for the same reverend father then governed that place also as abbot. From ancient times, the bishop was wont to reside there with his clergy, and the abbot with his monks, who were likewise under the paternal care of the bishop; because Aidan, who was the first bishop of the place, being himself a monk, brought monks thither, and settled the monastic institution there; as the blessed Father Augustine is known to have done before in Kent, when the most reverend Pope Gregory wrote to him, as has been said above, to this effect: "But in that you, my brother, having been instructed in monastic rules, must not live apart from your clergy in the Church of the English, which has been lately, by the will of God, converted to the faith, you must establish the manner of conversation of our fathers in the primitive Church, among whom, none said

that aught of the things which they possessed was his own; but they had all things common.”

CHAP. 28

Exin Cudberct crescentibus meritis religiosae intentionis, ad anchoriticae quoque contemplationis, quae diximus, silentia secreta peruenit. Uerum quia de uita illius et uirtutibus ante annos plures sufficienter et uersibus heroicis, et simplici oratione conscripsimus, hoc tantum in praesenti commemorare satis sit, quod aditurus insulam protestatus est fratribus, dicens: ‘Si mihi diuina gratia in loco illo donauerit, ut de opere manuum mearum uiuere queam, libens ibi morabor; sin alias, ad uos citissime Deo uolente reuertar.’ Erat autem locus et aquae prorsus et frugis et arboris inops, sed et spirituum malignorum frequentia humanae habitationi minus accommodus; sed ad uotum uiri Dei habitabilis per omnia factus est, siquidem ad aduentum eius spiritus recessere maligni. Cum autem ipse sibi ibidem expulsis hostibus mansionem angustam circumuallante aggere et domus in ea necessarias, iuuante fratrum manu, id est oratorium et habitaculum commune, construxisset, iussit fratres in eiusdem habitaculi pauimento foueam facere; erat autem tellus durissima et saxosa, cui nulla omnino spes uenae fontanae uideretur inesse. Quod dum facerent, ad fidem et preces famuli Dei, alio die aqua plena inuenta est, quae usque ad hanc diem sufficientem cunctis illo aduenientibus gratiae suae caelestis copiam ministrat. Sed et ferramenta sibi ruralia cum frumento adferri rogauit, quod dum praeparata terra tempore congruo seminare, nil omnino, non dico spicarum, sed ne herbae quidem ex eo germinare usque ad aestatis tempora contigit. Unde uisitantibus se ex more fratribus hordeum iussit adferri, si forte uel natura soli illius, uel uoluntas esset superni largitoris, ut illius frugis ibi potius seges oriretur. Quod dum sibi adlatum ultra omne tempus serendi, ultra omnem spem fructificandi eodem in agro sereret, mox copiosa seges exorta desideratam proprii laboris uiro Dei refectionem praebebat.

Cum ergo multis ibidem annis Deo solitarius seruiret, (tanta autem erat altitudo aggeris, quo mansio eius erat uallata, ut caelum tantum ex ea, cuius introitum sitiebat, aspicere posset), contigit, ut congregata synodo non parua sub praesentia regis Ecgfridi iuxta fluuium Alne, in loco, qui dicitur Aduifyrði, quod significat ‘ad duplex uadum,’ cui beatae memoriae Theodorus archiepiscopus praesidebat, unanimo omnium consensu ad episcopatum ecclesiae Lindisfarnensis eligeretur. Qui cum multis legatariis ac litteris ad se praemissis nequaquam suo monasterio posset erui, tandem rex ipse praefatus, una cum sanctissimo antistite Trumuine, nec non et aliis religiosis ac potentibus uiris insulam nauigauit. Conueniunt et de ipsa insula Lindisfarnensi in hoc ipsum multi de fratribus, genuflectunt omnes, adiurant per Dominum, lacrimas fundunt, obsecrant; donec ipsum quoque lacrimis plenum dulcibus extrahunt latebris, atque ad synodum pertrahunt. Quo dum perueniret, quamuis multum renitens, unanima cunctorum uoluntate superatur, atque ad suscipiendum episcopatus officium collum submittere compellitur; eo

maxime uictus sermone, quod famulus Domini Boisil, cum ei mente prophetica cuncta, quae eum essent superuentura, patefaceret, antistitem quoque eum futurum esse praedixerat. Nec tamen statim ordinatio decreta, sed peracta hieme, quae imminebat, in ipsa sollemnitate paschali completa est Eboraci sub praesentia praefati regis Ecgfridi, conuenientibus ad consecrationem eius VII episcopis, in quibus beatae memoriae Theodorus primatum tenebat. Electus est autem primo in episcopatum Hagustaldensis ecclesiae pro Tunbercto, qui ab episcopatu fuerat depositus; sed quoniam ipse plus Lindisfarnensi ecclesiae, in qua conuersatus fuerat, dilexit praefici, placuit, ut Eata reuerso ad sedem ecclesiae Hagustaldensis, cui regendae primo fuerat ordinatus, Cudberct ecclesiae Lindisfarnensis gubernacula susciperet.

Qui susceptum episcopatus gradum ad imitationem beatorum apostolorum uirtutum ornabat operibus. Commissam namque sibi plebem, et orationibus protegebat adsiduus, et admonitionibus saluberrimis ad caelestia uocabat. Et, quod maxime doctores iuuare solet, ea, quae agenda docebat, ipse prius agendo praemonstrabat. Erat quippe ante omnia diuinae caritatis igne feruidus, patientiae uirtute modestus, orationum deuotioni solertissime intentus, affabilis omnibus, qui ad se consolationis gratia ueniebant; hoc ipsum quoque orationis loco ducens, si infirmis fratribus opem suae exhortationis tribueret;

sciens, quia, qui dixit: ‘Diliges Dominum Deum tuum,’ dixit et: ‘Diliges proximum.’ Erat abstinentiae castigatione insignis, erat gratia conpunctionis semper ad caelestia suspensus. Denique cum sacrificium Deo uictimae salutaris offerret, non eleuata in altum uoce, sed profusis ex imo pectore lacrimis, Domino sua uota commendabat.

Chap. XXVIII.

How the same St. Cuthbert, living the life of an Anchorite, by his prayers obtained a spring in a dry soil, and had a crop from seed sown by the labour of his hands out of season. [676 a.d.]

After this, Cuthbert, as he grew in goodness and intensity of devotion, attained also to a hermit's life of contemplation in silence and solitude, as we have mentioned. But forasmuch as many years ago we wrote enough concerning his life and virtues, both in heroic verse and prose, it may suffice at present only to mention this, that when he was about to go to the island, he declared to the brothers, “If by the grace of God it shall be granted to me, that I may live in that place by the labour of my hands, I will willingly abide there; but if not, God willing, I will very soon return to you.” The place was quite destitute of water, corn, and trees; and being infested by evil spirits, was very ill suited for human habitation; but it became in all respects habitable, at the desire of the man of God; for at his coming the wicked spirits departed. When,

after expelling the enemy, he had, with the help of the brethren, built himself a narrow dwelling, with a mound about it, and the necessary cells in it, to wit, an oratory and a common living room, he ordered the brothers to dig a pit in the floor of the room, although the ground was hard and stony, and no hopes appeared of any spring. When they had done this relying upon the faith and prayers of the servant of God, the next day it was found to be full of water, and to this day affords abundance of its heavenly bounty to all that resort thither. He also desired that instruments for husbandry might be brought him, and some wheat; but having prepared the ground and sown the wheat at the proper season, no sign of a blade, not to speak of ears, had sprouted from it by the summer. Hereupon, when the brethren visited him according to custom, he ordered barley to be brought him, if haply it were either the nature of the soil, or the will of God, the Giver of all things, that such grain rather should grow there. He sowed it in the same field, when it was brought him, after the proper time of sowing, and therefore without any likelihood of its bearing fruit; but a plentiful crop immediately sprang up, and afforded the man of God the means which he had desired of supporting himself by his own labour.

When he had here served God in solitude many years, the mound which encompassed his dwelling being so high, that he could see nothing from it but heaven, which he thirsted to enter, it happened that a great synod was assembled in the presence of King Egfrid, near the river Alne, at a place called Aduifyrði, which signifies “at the two fords,” in which Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, presided, and there Cuthbert was, with one mind and consent of all, chosen bishop of the church of Lindisfarne. They could not, however, draw him from his hermitage, though many messengers and letters were sent to him. At last the aforesaid king himself, with the most holy Bishop Trumwine, and other religious and powerful men, sailed to the island; many also of the brothers from the isle of Lindisfarne itself, assembled together for the same purpose: they all knelt, and conjured him by the Lord, with tears and entreaties, till they drew him, also in tears, from his beloved retreat, and forced him to go to the synod. When he arrived there, he was very reluctantly overcome by the unanimous resolution of all present, and compelled to take upon himself the duties of the episcopate; being chiefly prevailed upon by the words of Boisil, the servant of God, who, when he had prophetically foretold all things that were to befall him, had also predicted that he should be a bishop. Nevertheless, the consecration was not appointed immediately; but when the winter, which was then at hand, was over, it was carried out at Easter, in the city of York, and in the presence of the aforesaid King Egfrid; seven bishops coming together for his consecration, among whom, Theodore, of blessed memory, was Primate. He was first elected bishop of the church of Hagustald, in the place of Tunbert, who had been deposed from the episcopate; but because he chose rather to be placed over the church of Lindisfarne, in which he had lived, it was thought fit that Eata should return to the see of the church of Hagustald, to which he had been first

ordained, and that Cuthbert should take upon him the government of the church of Lindisfarne.

Following the example of the blessed Apostles, he adorned the episcopal dignity by his virtuous deeds; for he both protected the people committed to his charge by constant prayer, and roused them, by wholesome admonitions, to thoughts of Heaven. He first showed in his own life what he taught others to do, a practice which greatly strengthens all teaching; for he was above all things inflamed with the fire of Divine charity, of sober mind and patient, most diligently intent on devout prayers, and kindly to all that came to him for comfort. He thought it stood in the stead of prayer to afford the weak brethren the help of his exhortation, knowing that he who said "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," said likewise, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour." He was noted for penitential abstinence, and was always through the grace of compunction, intent upon heavenly things. And when he offered up to God the Sacrifice of the saving Victim, he commended his prayer to the Lord, not with uplifted voice, but with tears drawn from the bottom of his heart.

CHAP. 29

Duobus autem annis in episcopatu peractis repetiit insulam ac monasterium suum, diuino admonitus oraculo, quia dies sibi mortis, uel uitae magis illius, quae sola uita dicenda est, iam adpropriet introitus; sicut ipse quoque tempore eodem nonnullis, sed uerbis obscurioribus, quae tamen postmodum manifeste intellegentur, solita sibi simplicitate pandebat; quibusdam autem hoc idem etiam manifeste reuelabat.

Erat enim presbyter uitae uenerabilis nomine Hereberct, iamdudum uiro Dei spiritalis amicitiae foedere copulatus; qui, in insula stagni illius pergrandis, de quo Deruuentionis fluuii primordia erumpunt, uitam ducens solitariam, annis singulis eum uisitare, et monita ab eo perpetuae salutis audire solebat. Hic cum audiret eum ad ciuitatem Lugubaliam deuenisse, uenit ex more, cupiens salutaribus eius exhortationibus ad superna desideria magis magisque accendi. Qui dum sese alterutrum caelestis uitae poculis debriarent, dixit inter alia antistes: 'Memento, frater Heriberct, ut modo, quicquid opus habes, me interroges mecumque loquaris; postquam enim ab inuicem digressi fuerimus, non ultra nos in hoc saeculo carnis obtutibus inuicem aspiciemus. Certus sum namque, quia tempus meae resolutionis instat, et uelox est depositio tabernaculi mei.' Qui haec audiens prouolutus est eius uestigiis, et fuis cum gemitu lacrimis: 'Obsecro,' inquit, 'per Dominum, ne me deseras, sed tui memor sis fidissimi sodalis, rogesque supernam pietatem, ut, cui simul in terris seruiuimus, ad eius uidendam gratiam simul transeamus ad caelos. Nosti enim, quia ad tui oris imperium semper uiuere studui, et, quicquid ignorantia uel fragilitate deliqui, aequae ad tuae uoluntatis examen mox emendare curauit.' Incubuit precibus antistes, statimque edoctus in spiritu inpetrasse se, quod petebat a Domino: 'Surge,' inquit, 'frater mi, et noli plorare, sed gaudio gaude, quia, quod rogauimus, superna nobis clementia donauit.'

Cuius promissi et prophetiae ueritatem sequens rerum astruxit euentus; quia et digredientes ab inuicem non se ultra corporaliter uiderunt, et uno eodemque die, hoc est XIIIo Kalendarum Aprilium, egredientes e corpore spiritus eorum mox beata inuicem uisione coniuncti sunt, atque angelico ministerio pariter ad regnum caeleste translati. Sed Heriberct diutina prius infirmitate decoquitur; illa, ut credibile est, dispensatione dominicae pietatis, ut, siquid minus haberet meriti a beato Cudbercto, suppleret hoc castigans longae egritudinis dolor; quatinus aequatus gratia suo intercessori, sicut uno eodemque tempore cum eo de corpore egredi, ita etiam una atque indissimili sede perpetuac beatitudinis meruisset recipi.

Obiit autem pater reuerentissimus in insula Farne, multum deprecatus fratres, ut ibi quoque sepeliretur, ubi non paruo tempore pro domino militaret. Attamen tandem eorum precibus uictus assensum dedit, ut ad insulam

Lindisfarnensium relatus, in ecclesia deponeretur. Quod dum factum esset, episcopatum ecclesiae illius anno uno seruabat uenerabilis antistes Uilfrid, donec eligeretur, qui pro Cudbercto antistes ordinari deberet.

Ordinatus est autem post haec Eadberct uir scientia scripturarum diuinarum simul et praeceptorum caelestium obseruantia, ac maxime elimosynarum operatione insignis; ita ut iuxta legem omnibus annis decimam non solum quadrupedum, uerum etiam frugum omnium, atque pomorum, nec non et uestimentorum partem pauperibus daret.

Chap. XXIX.

How this bishop foretold that his own death was at hand to the anchorite Herebert. [687 a.d.]

Having spent two years in his bishopric, he returned to his island and hermitage, being warned of God that the day of his death, or rather of his entrance into that life which alone can be called life, was drawing near; as he, at that time, with his wonted candour, signified to certain persons, though in words which were somewhat obscure, but which were nevertheless afterwards plainly understood; while to others he declared the same openly.

There was a certain priest, called Herebert, a man of holy life, who had long been united with the man of God, Cuthbert, in the bonds of spiritual friendship. This man leading a solitary life in the island of that great lake from which the river Derwent flows at its beginning, was wont to visit him every year, and to receive from him the teaching of everlasting salvation. Hearing that Bishop Cuthbert was come to the city of Lugubalia, he went thither to him, according to his custom, seeking to be more and more inflamed in heavenly desires through his wholesome admonitions. Whilst they alternately entertained one another with draughts of the celestial life, the bishop, among other things, said, "Brother Herebert, remember at this time to ask me and speak to me concerning all whereof you have need to ask and speak; for, when we part, we shall never again see one another with bodily eyesight in this world. For I know of a surety that the time of my departure is at hand, and that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle." Hearing these words, Herebert fell down at his feet, with tears and lamentations, and said, "I beseech you, by the Lord, not to forsake me; but to remember your most faithful companion, and entreat the mercy of God that, as we have served Him together upon earth, so we may depart together to behold His grace in Heaven. For you know that I have always endeavoured to live according to the words of your lips, and likewise whatsoever faults I have committed, either through ignorance or frailty, I have instantly sought to amend according to the judgement of your will." The bishop applied himself to prayer, and having presently had intimation in the spirit that he had obtained what he asked of the Lord, he said, "Rise, brother, and do not weep, but rejoice greatly because the

mercy of Heaven has granted what we desired.”

The event established the truth of this promise and prophecy, for after their parting, they never again saw one another in the flesh; but their spirits quitting their bodies on one and the same day, to wit, the 20th of March, were immediately united in fellowship in the blessed vision, and together translated to the heavenly kingdom by the ministry of angels. But Herebert was first wasted by a long-continued infirmity, through the dispensation of the Lord’s mercy, as may be believed, to the end that if he was in any wise inferior in merit to the blessed Cuthbert, that which was lacking might be supplied by the chastening pain of a long sickness, that being thus made equal in grace to his intercessor, as he departed out of the body at one and the same time with him, so he might be accounted worthy to be received into the like abode of eternal bliss.

The most reverend father died in the isle of Farne, earnestly entreating the brothers that he might also be buried there, where he had served no small time under the Lord’s banner. But at length yielding to their entreaties, he consented to be carried back to the isle of Lindisfarne, and there buried in the church. This being done, the venerable Bishop Wilfrid held the episcopal see of that church one year, till such time as a bishop should be chosen to be ordained in the room of Cuthbert. Afterwards Eadbert was ordained, a man renowned for his knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, as also for his observance of the heavenly precepts, and chiefly for almsgiving, so that, according to the law, he gave every year the tenth part, not only of four-footed beasts, but also of all corn and fruit, as also of his garments, to the poor.

CHAP. 30

Uolens autem latius demonstrare diuina dispensatio, quanta in gloria uir Domini Cudberct post mortem uiueret, cuius ante mortem uita sublimis crebris etiam miraculorum patebat indiciis, transactis sepulturae eius annis XI, inmisit in animo fratrum, ut tollerent ossa illius, quae more mortuorum consumto iam et in puluerem redacto corpore reliquo sicca inuenienda putabant; atque in nouo recondita loculo in eodem quidem loco, sed supra pauimentum dignae uenerationis gratia locarent. Quod dum sibi placuisse Eadbercto antistiti suo referrent, adnuuit consilio eorum, iussitque, ut die depositionis eius hoc facere meminissent.' Fecerunt autem ita, et aperientes sepulchrum, inuenerunt corpus totum, quasi adhuc uiueret, integrum et flexibilibus artuum compagibus multo dormienti quam mortuo similis; sed et uestimenta omnia, quibus indutum erat, non solum intemerata, uerum etiam prisca nouitate et claritudine miranda parebant. Quod ubi uidere fratres, nimio mox timore perculsi, festinarunt referre antistiti, quae inuenerant. Qui tum forte in remotiore ab ecclesia loco refluus undique pelagi fluctibus cincto, solitarius manebat. In hoc etenim semper quadragesimae tempus agere, in hoc XL ante dominicum natale dies in magna continentiae, orationis, et lacrimarum deuotione transigere solebat; in quo etiam uenerabilis praedecessor eius Cudberct, priusquam insulam Farne peteret, aliquandiu secretus Domino militabat.

A dtulerunt autem ei et partem indumentorum, quae corpus sanctum ambierant, quae cum ille et munera gratanter acciperet, et miracula libenter audiret, nam et ipsa indumenta quasi patris adhuc corpori circumdata miro deosculabatur affectu, 'Noua,' inquit, 'indumenta corpori pro his, quae tulistis, circumdate, et sic reponite in arca, quam parastis. Scio autem certissime, quia non diu uacuu remanebit locus ille, qui tanta miraculi caelestis gratia sacratus est; et quam beatus est, cui in eo facultatem quiescendi Dominus totius beatitudinis auctor atque largitor praestare dignabitur.' Haec et huiusmodi plura ubi multis cum lacrimis et magna conpunctione antistes lingua etiam tremente conpleuit, fecerunt fratres, ut iusserat; et inuolutum nouo amictu corpus, nouaque in theca reconditum, supra pauimentum sanctuarii posuerunt.

Nec mora, Deo dilectus antistes Eadberct morbo correptus est acerbo, ac per dies crescente, multumque ingrauescente ardore langoris, non multo post, id est pridie Nonas Maias, etiam ipse migravit ad Dominum; cuius corpus in sepulchro benedicti patris Cudbercti ponentes, adposuerunt desuper arcam, in qua incorrupta eiusdem patris membra locauerant. In quo etiam loco signa sanitatum aliquoties facta meritis amborum testimonium ferunt, e quibus aliqua in libro uitae illius olim memoriae mandauimus. Sed et in hac historia quaedam, quae nos nuper audisse contigit, superadicere commodum duximus.

How his body was found altogether uncorrupted after it had been buried eleven years; and how his successor in the bishopric departed this world not long after. [698 a.d.]

In order to show forth the great glory of the life after death of the man of God, Cuthbert, whereas the loftiness of his life before his death had been revealed by the testimony of many miracles, when he had been buried eleven years, Divine Providence put it into the minds of the brethren to take up his bones. They thought to find them dry and all the rest of the body consumed and turned to dust, after the manner of the dead, and they desired to put them into a new coffin, and to lay them in the same place, but above the pavement, for the honour due to him. They made known their resolve to Bishop Eadbert, and he consented to it, and bade them to be mindful to do it on the anniversary of his burial. They did so, and opening the grave, found all the body whole, as if he were still alive, and the joints of the limbs pliable, like one asleep rather than dead; besides, all the vestments in which he was clothed were not only undefiled, but marvellous to behold, being fresh and bright as at the first. The brothers seeing this, were struck with a great dread, and hastened to tell the bishop what they had found; he being then alone in a place remote from the church, and encompassed on all sides by the shifting waves of the sea. There he always used to spend the time of Lent, and was wont to pass the forty days before the Nativity of our Lord, in great devotion with abstinence and prayer and tears. There also his venerable predecessor, Cuthbert, had for some time served as the soldier of the Lord in solitude before he went to the isle of Farne.

They brought him also some part of the garments that had covered the holy body; which presents he thankfully accepted, and gladly heard of the miracles, and he kissed the garments even, with great affection, as if they had been still upon his father's body, and said, "Let new garments be put upon the body, in place of these you have brought, and so lay it in the coffin which you have prepared; for I know of a surety that the place will not long remain empty, which has been hallowed with so great grace of heavenly miracles; and how happy is he to whom the Lord, the Author and Giver of all bliss, shall vouchsafe to grant the privilege of resting therein." When the bishop had made an end of saying this and more in like manner, with many tears and great compunction and with faltering tongue, the brothers did as he had commanded them, and when they had wrapped the body in new garments, and laid it in a new coffin, they placed it above the pavement of the sanctuary. Soon after, Bishop Eadbert, beloved of God, fell grievously sick, and his fever daily increasing in severity, ere long, that is, on the 6th of May, he also departed to the Lord, and they laid his body in the grave of the blessed father Cuthbert, placing over it the coffin, with the uncorrupted remains of that father. The miracles of healing, sometimes wrought in that place testify to the merits of them both; of some of these we have before preserved the memory

in the book of his life. But in this History we have thought fit to add some others which have lately come to our knowledge.

CHAP. 31

Erat in eodem monasterio frater quidam, nomine Badudegn, tempore non pauco hospitum ministerio deseruiens, qui nunc usque superest, testimonium habens ab uniuersis fratribus, cunctisque superuenientibus hospitibus, quod uir esset multae pietatis ac religionis, iniunctoque sibi officio supernae tantum mercedis gratia subditus. Hic cum quadam die lenas siue saga, quibus in hospitale utebatur, in mari lauasset, rediens domum, repentina medio itinere molestia tactus est, ita ut corruens in terram, et aliquandiu pronus iacens, uix tandem resurgeret. Resurgens autem sensit dimidiam corporis sui partem a capite usque ad pedes paralysis langore depressam, et maximo cum labore baculo innitens domum peruenit.

Crescebat morbus paulatim, et nocte superueniente grauior effectus est, ita ut die redeunte uix ipse per se exsurgere aut incedere ualeret. Quo affectus incommodo, concepit utillimum mente consilium, ut ad ecclesiam, quoquo modo posset, perueniens, intraret ad tumbam reuerentissimi patris Cudbercti, ibique genibus flexis supplex supernam pietatem rogaret, ut uel ab huiuscemodi langore, si hoc sibi utile esset, liberaretur; uel, si se tali molestia diutius castigari diuina prouidente gratia oporteret, patienter dolorem ac placida mente sustineret inlatum. Fecit igitur, ut animo disposuerat, et inbecilles artus baculo sustentans intrauit ecclesiam; ac prosternens se ad corpus uiri Dei, pia intentione per eius auxilium Dominum sibi propitium fieri precabatur; atque inter preces uelut in soporem solutus, sentit, ut ipse postea referre erat solitus, quasi magnam latamque manum caput sibi in parte, qua dolebat, tetigisse, eodemque tactu totam illam, quae langore pressa fuerat, corporis sui partem, paulatim fugiente dolore, ac sanitate subsequente, ad pedes usque pertransisse. Quo facto, mox euigilans sanissimus surrexit, ac pro sua sanitate Domino gratias denuo referens, quid erga se actum esset, fratribus indicauit; cunctisque congaudentibus, ad ministerium, quod sollicitus exhibere solebat, quasi flagello probante castigatior, rediit.

Sed et indumenta, quibus Deo dicatum corpus Cudbercti, uel uiuum antea, uel postea defunctum uestierant, etiam ipsa a gratia curandi non uacarunt, sicut in uolumine uitae et uirtutum eius quisque legerit, inueniet.

Chap. XXXI.

Of one that was cured of a palsy at his tomb.

There was in that same monastery a brother whose name was Badudegn, who had for no small time ministered to the guests of the house, and is still living, having the testimony of all the brothers and strangers resorting thither, of being a man of much piety and religion, and serving the office put upon him only for the sake of the heavenly reward. This man, having one day washed in

the sea the coverings or blankets which he used in the guest chamber, was returning home, when on the way, he was seized with a sudden infirmity, insomuch that he fell to the ground, and lay there a long time and could scarce at last rise again. When he got up, he felt one half of his body, from the head to the foot, struck with palsy, and with great trouble made his way home by the help of a staff. The disease increased by degrees, and as night approached, became still worse, so that when day returned, he could scarcely rise or walk alone. Suffering from this trouble, he conceived the wise resolve to go to the church, as best he could, and approach the tomb of the reverend father Cuthbert, and there, on his knees, humbly beseech the mercy of God that he might either be delivered from that disease, if it were well for him, or if by the grace of God it was ordained for him to be chastened longer by this affliction, that he might bear the pain which was laid upon him with patience and a quiet mind.

He did accordingly as he had determined, and supporting his weak limbs with a staff, entered the church. There prostrating himself before the body of the man of God, he prayed with pious earnestness, that, through his intercession, the Lord might be propitious to him. As he prayed, he seemed to fall into a deep sleep, and, as he was afterwards wont to relate, felt a large and broad hand touch his head, where the pain lay, and likewise pass over all that part of his body which had been benumbed by the disease, down to his feet. Gradually the pain departed and health returned. Then he awoke, and rose up in perfect health, and returning thanks to the Lord for his recovery, told the brothers what had been done for him; and to the joy of them all, returned the more zealously, as if chastened by the trial of his affliction, to the service which he was wont before to perform with care.

Moreover, the very garments which had been on Cuthbert's body, dedicated to God, either while he was alive, or after his death, were not without the virtue of healing, as may be seen in the book of his life and miracles, by such as shall read it.

CHAP. 32

Nec silentio praetereundum, quod ante triennium per reliquias eius factum, nuper mihi per ipsum, in quo factum est, fratrem innotuit.

Est autem factum in monasterio, quod iuxta amnem Dacore constructum ab eo cognomen accepit, cui tunc uir religiosus Suidberct abbatis iure praefuit. Erat in eo quidam adulescens, cui tumor deformis palpebram oculi fedauerat; qui cum per dies crescens oculo interitum minaretur, curabant medici hunc adpositis pigmentorum fomentis emollire, nec ualebant. Quidam abscidendum esse docebant, alii hoc fieri metu maioris periculi uetabant. Cumque tempore non pauco frater praefatus tali incommodo laboraret, neque inminens oculo exitium humana manus curare ualeret, quin per dies augesceret, contigit eum subito diuinae pietatis gratia per sanctissimi patris Cudbercti reliquias sanari. Nam quando fratres sui corpus ipsius post multos sepulturae annos incorruptum reppererunt, tulerunt partem de capillis, quam more reliquiarum rogantibus amicis dare, uel ostendere in signum miraculi possent.

Harum particulam reliquiarum eo tempore habebat penes se quidam de presbyteris eiusdem monasterii nomine Thruired, qui nunc ipsius monasterii abbas est. Qui cum die quadam ingressus ecclesiam, aperuisset thecam reliquiarum, ut portionem earum roganti amico praestaret, contigit et ipsum adulescentem, cui oculus languebat, in eadem tunc ecclesia adesse. Cumque presbyter portionem, quantam uoluit, amico dedisset, residuum dedit adulescenti, ut suo in loco reponeret. At ille salubri instinctu admonitus, cum accepisset capillos sancti capitis, adposuit palpebrae languenti, et aliquandiu tumorem illum infestum horum adpositione conprimere ac mollire curabat. Quo facto, reliquias, ut iussus erat, sua in theca recondidit, credens suum oculum capillis uiri Dei, quibus adtactus erat, ocius esse sanandum. Neque eum sua fides fefellit. Erat enim, ut referre est solitus, tunc hora circiter secunda diei. Sed cum alia, quaeque dies illa exigebat, cogitaret et faceret, imminente hora ipsius diei sexta, repente contingens oculum ita sanum cum palpebra inuenit, ac si nil umquam in eo deformitatis ac tumoris apparuisset.

Chap. XXXII.

Of one who was lately cured of a disease in his eye at the relics of St. Cuthbert.

Nor is that cure to be passed over in silence, which was performed by his relics three years ago, and was told me lately by the brother himself, on whom it was wrought. It happened in the monastery, which, being built near the river Dacore, has taken its name from the same, over which, at that time, the religious Suidbert presided as abbot. In that monastery was a youth whose eyelid was disfigured by an unsightly tumour, which growing daily greater,

threatened the loss of the eye. The physicians endeavoured to mitigate it by applying ointments, but in vain. Some said it ought to be cut off; others opposed this course, for fear of greater danger. The brother having long laboured under this malady, when no human means availed to save his eye, but rather, it grew daily worse, on a sudden, through the grace of the mercy of God, it came to pass that he was cured by the relics of the holy father, Cuthbert. For when the brethren found his body uncorrupted, after having been many years buried, they took some part of the hair, to give, as relics, to friends who asked for them, or to show, in testimony of the miracle.

One of the priests of the monastery, named Thruired, who is now abbot there, had a small part of these relics by him at that time. One day he went into the church and opened the box of relics, to give some part of them to a friend who asked for it, and it happened that the youth who had the diseased eye was then in the church. The priest, having given his friend as much as he thought fit, gave the rest to the youth to put back into its place. But he having received the hairs of the holy head, prompted by some salutary impulse, applied them to the diseased eyelid, and endeavoured for some time, by the application of them, to abate and mitigate the tumour. Having done this, he again laid the relics in the box, as he had been bidden, believing that his eye would soon be cured by the hairs of the man of God, which had touched it; nor did his faith disappoint him. It was then, as he is wont to relate, about the second hour of the day; but while he was occupied with other thoughts and business of the day, on a sudden, about the sixth hour of the same, touching his eye, he found it and the eyelid as sound as if there never had been any disfigurement or tumour on it.

LIBER QUINTUS — BOOK V

CHAP. 1

Successit autem uiro Domini Cudbercto in exercenda uita solitaria, quam in insula Farne ante episcopatus sui tempora gerebat, uir uenerabilis Oidiluald, qui multis annis in monasterio, quod dicitur Inhrypum, acceptum presbyteratus officium condignis gradu ipse consecrabat actibus. Cuius ut meritum, uel uita qualis fuerit, certius clarescat, unum eius narro miraculum, quod mihi unus e fratribus, propter quos et in quibus patratum est, ipse narrauit, uidelicet Gudfrid, uenerabilis Christi famulus et presbyter, qui etiam postea fratribus eiusdem ecclesiae Lindisfarnensis, in qua educatus est, abbatis iure praefuit.

‘Ueni,’ inquit, ‘cum duobus fratribus aliis ad insulam Farne, loqui desiderans cum reuerentissimo patre Oidilualdo; cumque allocutione eius refecti, et benedictione petita domum rediremus, ecce subito, positis nobis in medio mari, interrupta est serenitas, qua uehebamur, et tanta ingruit tamque fera tempestatis hiems, ut neque uelo neque remigio quicquam proficere, neque aliud quam mortem sperare ualeremus. Cumque diu multum cum uento pelagoque frustra certantes, tandem post terga respiceremus, si forte uel ipsam, de qua egressi eramus, insulam aliquo conamine repetere possemus, inuenimus nos undiqueuersum pari tempestate praeclusos, nullamque spem nobis in nobis restare salutis Ubi autem longius uisum leuauimus, uidimus in ipsa insula Farne egressum de latibulis suis amantissimum Deo patrem Oidilualdum iter nostrum inspicere. Audito etenim fragore procellarum ac feruentis oceani exierat uidere, quid nobis accideret; cumque nos in labore ac desperatione positos cerneret, flectebat genua sua ad patrem Domini nostri Iesu Christi pro nostra uita et salute precaturus. Et cum orationem conpleret, simul tumida aequora placauit; adeo ut, cessante per omnia saeuitia tempestatis, secundi nos uenti ad terram usque per plana maris terga comitarentur. Cumque euadentes ad terram, nauiculam quoque nostram ab undis exportaremus, mox eadem, quae nostri gratia modicum siluerat, tempestas rediit, et toto illo die multum furere non cessauit; ut palam daretur intellegi, quia modica illa, quae prouenerat, intercapedo quietis, ad uiri Dei preces nostrae euasionis gratia caelitus donata est.’

Mansit autem idem uir Dei in insula Farne XII annis, ibidemque defunctus; sed in insula Lindisfarnensi iuxta praefatorum corpora episcoporum in ecclesia beati apostoli Petri sepultus est. Gesta uero sunt haec temporibus Aldfridi regis, qui post fratrem suum Ecgfridum genti Nordanhymbrorum X et VIII annis praefuit.

Chap. I.

How Ethelwald, successor to Cuthbert, leading a hermit's life, calmed a tempest by his prayers when the brethren were in danger at sea. [687-699 a.d.]

The venerable Ethelwald succeeded the man of God, Cuthbert, in the exercise of a solitary life, which he spent in the isle of Farne before he became a bishop. After he had received the priesthood, he consecrated his office by deeds worthy of that degree for many years in the monastery which is called Inhrypum. To the end that his merit and manner of life may be the more certainly made known, I will relate one miracle of his, which was told me by one of the brothers for and on whom the same was wrought; to wit, Guthfrid, the venerable servant and priest of Christ, who also, afterwards, as abbot, presided over the brethren of the same church of Lindisfarne, in which he was educated.

“I came,” says he, “to the island of Farne, with two others of the brethren, desiring to speak with the most reverend father, Ethelwald. Having been refreshed with his discourse, and asked for his blessing, as we were returning home, behold on a sudden, when we were in the midst of the sea, the fair weather in which we were sailing, was broken, and there arose so great and terrible a tempest, that neither sails nor oars were of any use to us, nor had we anything to expect but death. After long struggling with the wind and waves to no effect, at last we looked back to see whether it was possible by any means at least to return to the island whence we came, but we found that we were on all sides alike cut off by the storm, and that there was no hope of escape by our own efforts. But looking further, we perceived, on the island of Farne, our father Ethelwald, beloved of God, come out of his retreat to watch our course; for, hearing the noise of the tempest and raging sea, he had come forth to see what would become of us. When he beheld us in distress and despair, he bowed his knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, in prayer for our life and safety; and as he finished his prayer, he calmed the swelling water, in such sort that the fierceness of the storm ceased on all sides, and fair winds attended us over a smooth sea to the very shore. When we had landed, and had pulled up our small vessel from the waves, the storm, which had ceased a short time for our sake, presently returned, and raged furiously during the whole day; so that it plainly appeared that the brief interval of calm had been granted by Heaven in answer to the prayers of the man of God, to the end that we might escape.”

The man of God remained in the isle of Farne twelve years, and died there; but was buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, in the isle of Lindisfarne, beside the bodies of the aforesaid bishops. These things happened in the days of King Aldfrid, who, after his brother Egfrid, ruled the nation of the Northumbrians for nineteen years.

CHAP. 2

Cuius regni principio defuncto Eata episcopo, Iohannes uir sanctus Hagustaldensis ecclesiae praesulatum suscepit; de quo plura uirtutum miracula, qui eum familiariter nouerunt, dicere solent, et maxime uir reuerentissimus ac ueracissimus Bercthun, diaconus quondam eius, nunc autem abbas monasterii, quod uocatur Inderauuda, id est In silua Derorum; e quibus aliqua memoriae tradere commodum duximus.

Est mansio quaedam secretior, nemore raro et uallo circumdata, non longe ab Hagustaldensi ecclesia, id est unius ferme miliarii et dimidii spatio interfluente Tino amne separata, habens clymeterium sancti Michahelis archangeli, in qua uir Dei saepius, ubi oportunitas adridebat temporis, et maxime in quadragesima, manere cum paucis, atque orationibus ac lectioni quietus operam dare consueuerat. Cumque tempore quodam, incipiente quadragesima, ibidem mansurus adueniret, iussit suis quaerere pauperem aliquem maiore infirmitate uel inopia grauatum, quem secum habere illis diebus ad faciendam elemosynam possent; sic enim semper facere solebat.

Erat autem in uilla non longe posita quidam adulescens mutus, episcopo notus, nam saepius ante illum percipiendae elemosynae gratia uenire consueuerat, qui ne unum quidem sermonem umquam profari poterat; sed et scabiem tantam ac furfures habebat in capite, ut nil umquam capillorum ei in superiore parte capitis nasci ualeret, tantum in circuitu horridi crines stare uidebantur. Hunc ergo adduci praecipit episcopus, et ei in conseptis eiusdem mansionis paruum tugurium fieri, in quo manens cotidianam ab eis stipem acciperet. Cumque una quadragesimae esset impleta septimana, sequente dominica iussit ad se intrare pauperem, ingresso linguam proferre ex ore, ac sibi ostendere iussit; et adprehendens eum de mento, signum sanctae crucis linguae eius inpressit, quam signatam reuocare in os, et loqui illum praecepit: ‘Dicito,’

inquiens, ‘aliquod uerbum, dicito gae,’ quod est lingua Anglorum uerbum adfirmandi et consentiendi, id est, etiam. Dixit ille statim, soluto uinculo linguae, quod iussus erat. Addidit episcopus nomina litterarum: ‘Dicito A’; dixit ille A. ‘Dicito B’; dixit ille et hoc.

Cumque singula litterarum nomina dicente episcopo responderet, addidit et syllabas ac uerba dicenda illi proponere. Et cum in omnibus consequenter responderet, praecepit eum sententias longiores dicere, et fecit; neque ultra cessauit tota die illa et nocte sequente, quantum uigilare potuit, ut ferunt, qui praesentes fuere, loqui aliquid, et arcana suae cogitationis ac uoluntatis, quod numquam antea potuit, aliis ostendere; in similitudinem illius diu claudi, qui curatus ab apostolis Petro et Iohanne, exiliens stetit, et ambulabat; et intrauit cum illis in templum, ambulans, et exiliens, et laudans Dominum; gaudens nimirum uti officio pedum, quo tanto erat tempore destitutus. Cuius sanitati

congaudens episcopus praecepit medico etiam sanandae scabredini capitis eius curam adhibere.

Fecit, ut iusserat, et iuuante benedictione ac precibus antistitis, nata est cum sanitate cutis uenusta species capillorum, factusque est iuuenis limpidus uultu et loquella promptus, capillis pulcherrime crispis, qui ante fuerat deformis, pauper, et mutus. Sicque de percepta laetatus sospitate, offerente etiam ei episcopo, ut in sua familia manendi locum acciperet, magis domum reuersus est.

Chap. II.

How Bishop John cured a dumb man by his blessing. [687 a.d.]

In the beginning of Aldfrid's reign, Bishop Eata died, and was succeeded in the bishopric of the church of Hagustald by the holy man John, of whom those that knew him well are wont to tell many miracles, and more particularly Berthun, a man worthy of all reverence and of undoubted truthfulness, and once his deacon, now abbot of the monastery called Inderauuda, that is, "In the wood of the Deiri": some of which miracles we have thought fit to hand on to posterity. There is a certain remote dwelling enclosed by a mound, among scattered trees, not far from the church of Hagustald, being about a mile and a half distant and separated from it by the river Tyne, having an oratory dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel, where the man of God used frequently, as occasion offered, and specially in Lent, to abide with a few companions and in quiet give himself to prayer and study. Having come hither once at the beginning of Lent to stay, he bade his followers find out some poor man labouring under any grievous infirmity, or want, whom they might keep with them during those days, to receive alms, for so he was always used to do.

There was in a township not far off, a certain youth who was dumb, known to the bishop, for he often used to come into his presence to receive alms. He had never been able to speak one word; besides, he had so much scurf and scab on his head, that no hair could ever grow on the top of it, but only some rough hairs stood on end round about it. The bishop caused this young man to be brought, and a little hut to be made for him within the enclosure of the dwelling, in which he might abide, and receive alms from him every day. When one week of Lent was over, the next Sunday he bade the poor man come to him, and when he had come, he bade him put his tongue out of his mouth and show it him; then taking him by the chin, he made the sign of the Holy Cross on his tongue, directing him to draw it back so signed into his mouth and to speak. "Pronounce some word," said he; "say 'gae,'" which, in the language of the English, is the word of affirming and consenting, that is, yes. The youth's tongue was immediately loosed, and he spoke as he was bidden. The bishop then added the names of the letters: "Say A." He said A. "Say B;" he said B also. When he had repeated all the letters after the bishop,

the latter proceeded to put syllables and words to him, and when he had repeated them all rightly he bade him utter whole sentences, and he did it. Nor did he cease all that day and the next night, as long as he could keep awake, as those who were present relate, to say something, and to express his private thoughts and wishes to others, which he could never do before; after the manner of the man long lame, who, when he was healed by the Apostles Peter and John, leaping up, stood and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking, and leaping, and praising the Lord, rejoicing to have the use of his feet, which he had so long lacked. The bishop, rejoicing with him at his cure, caused the physician to take in hand the healing of the sores of his head. He did as he was bidden, and with the help of the bishop's blessing and prayers, a goodly head of hair grew as the skin was healed. Thus the youth became fair of countenance, ready of speech, with hair curling in comely fashion, whereas before he had been ill-favoured, miserable, and dumb. Thus filled with joy at his recovered health, notwithstanding that the bishop offered to keep him in his own household, he chose rather to return home.

CHAP. 3

Narrauit idem Bercthun et aliud de praefato antistite miraculum:

quia cum reuerentissimus uir Uilfrid post longum exilium in episcopatum esset Hagustaldensis ecclesiae receptus, et idem Iohannes, defuncto Bosa uiro multae sanctitatis et humilitatis, episcopus pro eo Eboraci substitutus, uenerit ipse tempore quodam ad monasterium uirginum in loco, qui uocatur Uetadun, cui tunc Heriburg abbatissa praefuit. 'Ubi cum uenissemus,' inquit, 'et magno uniuersorum gaudio suscepti essemus, indicauit nobis abbatissa, quia quaedam de numero uirginum, quae erat filia ipsius carnalis, grauissimo langore teneretur; quia flebotomata est nuper in brachio, et cum esset in studio, tacta est infirmitate repentini doloris, quo mox increscente, magis grauatum est brachium illud uulneratum, ac uersum in tumorem adeo, ut uix duabus manibus circumplecti posset, ipsaque iacens in lecto prae nimietate doloris iam moritura uideretur. Rogauit ergo episcopum abbatissa, ut intrare ad eam, ac benedicere illam dignaretur, quia crederet eam ad benedictionem uel tactum illius mox melius habituram. Interrogans autem ille, quando flebotomata esset puella, et ut cognouit, quia in luna quarta, dixit: 'Multum insipienter et indocte fecistis in luna IIII flebotomando. Memini enim beatae memoriae Theodorum archiepiscopum dicere, quia periculosa sit satis illius temporis flebotomia, quando et lumen lunae, et reuma oceani in cremento est. Et quid ego possum puellae, si moritura est, facere?' At illa instantius obsecrans pro filia, quam oppido diligebat, nam et abbatissam eam pro se facere disposuerat, tandem obtinuit, ut ad languentem intraret. Intrauit ergo me secum adsumto ad uirginem, quae iacebat multo, ut dixi, dolore constricta, et brachio in tantum grossescere, ut nihil prorsus in cubito flexionis haberet; et adstans dixit orationem super illam, ac benedicens egressus est. Cumque post haec hora conpetente consideremus ad mensam, adueniens quidam clamauit me foras, et ait: 'Postulat Quoenburg' (hoc enim erat nomen uirginis), 'ut ocius regrediaris ad eam.' Quod dum facerem, repperi illam ingrediens uultu hilariorem, et uelut sospiti similem. Et dum adsiderem illi, dixit: 'Uis petamus bibere?' At ego: 'Uolo,'

inquam, 'et multum delector, si potes.' Cumque oblato poculo biberemus ambo, coepit mihi dicere, quia 'ex quo episcopus oratione pro me et benedictione completa egressus est, statim melius habere incipio; etsi necdum uires pristinas recepi, dolor tamen omnis et de brachio, ubi ardentior inerat, et de toto meo corpore, uelut ipso episcopo foras eum exportante, funditus ablatus est, tametsi tumor adhuc brachii manere uidetur.' Abeuntibus autem nobis inde, continuo fugatum dolorem membrorum fuga quoque tumoris horrendi secuta est;

et erepta morti ac doloribus uirgo, laudes Domino Saluatori una cum ceteris, qui ibi erant, seruis illius referebat.'

How he healed a sick maiden by his prayers. [705 a.d.]

The same Berthun told another miracle concerning the said bishop. When the most reverend Wilfrid, after a long banishment, was admitted to the bishopric of the church of Hagustald, and the aforesaid John, upon the death of Bosa, a man of great sanctity and humility, was, in his place, appointed bishop of York, he himself came, once upon a time, to the monastery of nuns, at the place called Wetadun, where the Abbess Heriburg then presided. "When we were come thither," said he, "and had been received with great and universal joy, the abbess told us, that one of the nuns, who was her own daughter after the flesh, laboured under a grievous sickness, for she had been lately let blood in the arm, and whilst she was under treatment, was seized with an attack of sudden pain, which speedily increased, while the wounded arm became worse, and so much swollen, that it could scarce be compassed with both hands; and she lay in bed like to die through excess of pain. Wherefore the abbess entreated the bishop that he would vouchsafe to go in and give her his blessing; for she believed that she would soon be better if he blessed her or laid his hands upon her. He asked when the maiden had been let blood, and being told that it was on the fourth day of the moon, said, 'You did very indiscreetly and unskilfully to let blood on the fourth day of the moon; for I remember that Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, said, that blood-letting at that time was very dangerous, when the light of the moon is waxing and the tide of the ocean is rising. And what can I do for the maiden if she is like to die?'

"But the abbess still earnestly entreated for her daughter, whom she dearly loved, and designed to make abbess in her stead, and at last prevailed with him to go in and visit the sick maiden. Wherefore he went in, taking me with him to the maid, who lay, as I said, in sore anguish, and her arm swelling so greatly that it could not be bent at all at the elbow; and he stood and said a prayer over her, and having given his blessing, went out. Afterwards, as we were sitting at table, at the usual hour, some one came in and called me out, saying, 'Quoenburg' (that was the maid's name) 'desires that you should immediately go back to her.' This I did, and entering the chamber, I found her of more cheerful countenance, and like one in good health. And while I was sitting beside her, she said, 'Shall we call for something to drink?'— 'Yes,' said I, 'and right glad am I, if you can.' When the cup was brought, and we had both drunk, she said, 'As soon as the bishop had said the prayer for me and given me his blessing and had gone out, I immediately began to mend; and though I have not yet recovered my former strength, yet all the pain is quite gone both from my arm, where it was most burning, and from all my body, as if the bishop had carried it away with him; notwithstanding the swelling of the arm still seems to remain.' But when we departed thence, the

cure of the pain in her limbs was followed by the assuaging of the grievous swelling; and the maiden being thus delivered from pains and death, returned praise to our Lord and Saviour, in company with His other servants who were there.”

CHAP. 4

Aliud quoque non multum huic dissimile miraculum de praefato antistite narrauit idem abbas, dicens: ‘Uilla erat comitis cuiusdam, qui uocabatur Puch, non longe a monasterio nostro, id est duum ferme milium spatio separata; cuius coniux XL ferme diebus erat acerbissimo langore detenta, ita ut tribus septimanis non posset de cubiculo, in quo iacebat, foras efferri. Contigit autem eo tempore uirum Dei illo ad dedicandam ecclesiam ab eodem comite uocari.

Cumque dedicata esset ecclesia, rogauit comes eum ad prandendum in domum suam ingredi. Rennuit episcopus dicens se ad monasterium, quod proxime erat, debere reuerti. At ille obnixius precibus instans, uouit etiam se elimosynas pauperibus daturum, dummodo ille dignaretur eo die domum suam ingrediens ieiunium soluere. Rogauit et ego una cum illo, promittens etiam me elimosynas in alimoniam inopum dare, dum ille domum comitis pransurus, ac benedictionem daturus intraret. Cumque hoc tarde ac difficulter inpetrarem, intrauimus ad reficiendum. Miserat autem episcopus mulieri, quae infirma iacebat, de aqua benedicta, quam in dedicationem ecclesiae consecrauerat, per unum de his, qui mecum uenerant, fratribus;

praecipiens, ut gustandam illi daret, et, ubicumque maximum ei dolorem inesse didicisset, de ipsa eam aqua lauaret. Quod ut factum est, surrexit statim mulier sana, et non solum se infirmitate longa carere, sed et perditas dudum uires recepisce sentiens, obtulit poculum episcopo ac nobis; coeptumque ministerium nobis omnibus propinandi usque ad prandium completum non omisit; imitata socrum beati Petri, quae cum febrium fuisset ardoribus fatigata, ad tactum manus dominicae surrexit, et sanitate simul ac uirtute recepta ministrabat eis.’

Chap. IV.

How he healed a thegn’s wife that was sick, with holy water.

The same abbot related another miracle, not unlike the former, of the aforesaid bishop. “Not very far from our monastery,” he said, “to wit, about two miles off, was the township of one Puch, a thegn, whose wife had lain sick of a very grievous disease for nearly forty days, insomuch that for three weeks she could not be carried out of the chamber where she lay. It happened that the man of God was, at that time, called thither by the thegn to consecrate a church; and when that was done, the thegn desired him to come into his house and dine. The bishop declined, saying that he must return to the monastery, which was very near. The thegn, entreating him more earnestly, vowed he would also give alms to the poor, if so be that the bishop would vouchsafe to enter his house that day and break his fast. I joined my entreaties to his, promising in like manner to give alms for the relief of the poor, if he

would but go and dine at the thegn's house, and give his blessing. Having at length, with much difficulty, prevailed, we went in to refresh ourselves. The bishop had sent to the woman that lay sick some of the holy water, which he had blessed for the consecration of the church, by one of the brothers who had come with me, ordering him to give her some to drink, and wash that part of her where he found that her pain was greatest, with some of the same water. This being done, the woman immediately got up whole and sound, and perceiving that she had not only been delivered from her long sickness, but at the same time had recovered the strength which she had lost for so great a time, she presented the cup to the bishop and to us, and continued serving us with meat and drink as she had begun, till dinner was over; following the example of the blessed Peter's wife's mother, who, having been sick of a fever, arose at the touch of our Lord's hand, and having forthwith received health and strength, ministered to them."

CHAP. 5

Alio item tempore uocatus ad dedicandam ecclesiam comitis uocabulo Addi, cum postulatum conplesset ministerium, rogatus est ab eodem comite intrare ad unum de pueris eius, qui acerrima egritudine premebatur, ita ut, deficiente penitus omni membrorum officio, iamiamque moriturus esse uideretur; cui etiam locus iam tunc erat praeparatus, in quo defunctus condi deberet. Addidit autem uir etiam lacrimas precibus, diligenter obsecrans, ut intraret oraturus pro illo, quia multum necessaria sibi esset uita ipsius; crederet uero, quia, si ille ei manum inponere, atque eum benedicere uoluisset, statim melius haberet. Intrauit ergo illo episcopus, et uidit eum mestis omnibus iam morti proximum, positumque loculum iuxta eum, in quo sepeliendus poni deberet; dixitque orationem, ac benedixit eum, et egrediens dixit solito consolantium sermone: 'Bene conualescas, et cito.' Cumque post haec sederent ad mensam, misit puer ad dominum suum, rogans sibi poculum uini mittere, quia sitiret. Gaudis ille multum, quia bibere posset, misit ei calicem uini benedictum ab episcopo; quem ut bibit, surrexit continuo, et ueterno infirmitatis discusso, induit se ipse uestimentis suis; et egressus inde intrauit, ac salutauit episcopum et conuiuas, dicens, quia ipse quoque delectaretur manducare et bibere cum eis. Iusserunt eum sedere secum ad epulas, multum gaudentes de sospitate illius.

Residebat, uescebatur, bibebat, laetabatur, quasi unus e conuiujs agebat; et multis post haec annis uiuens, in eadem, quam acceperat, salute permansit. Hoc autem miraculum memoratus abbas non se praesente factum, sed ab his, qui praesentes fuere, sibi perhibet esse relatum.

Chap. V.

How he likewise recalled by his prayers a thegn's servant from death.

At another time also, being called to consecrate the church of a thegn named Addi, when he had performed the required duty, he was entreated by the thegn to go in to one of his servants, who lay dangerously ill, insomuch that having lost all use of his limbs, he seemed to be at the point of death; and moreover the coffin had been made ready wherein to bury him after his death. The thegn urged his entreaties with tears, earnestly beseeching him that he would go in and pray for the servant, because his life was of great moment to him; and he believed that if the bishop would lay his hand upon him and give him his blessing, he would soon mend. So the bishop went in, and saw him very near death, and by his side the coffin in which he was to be laid for his burial, whilst all mourned. He said a prayer and blessed him, and going out, spake the wonted words of comfort, "Good health be yours and that speedily." Afterwards, when they were sitting at table, the servant sent to his lord,

desiring that he would let him have a cup of wine, because he was thirsty. The thegn, rejoicing greatly that he could drink, sent him a cup of wine, blessed by the bishop; and, as soon as he had drunk it, he immediately got up, and, shaking off the heaviness of his infirmity, dressed himself and went forth, and going in to the bishop, saluted him and the other guests, saying that he also would gladly eat and drink with them. They bade him sit down with them at table, greatly rejoicing at his recovery. He sat down, ate and drank and made merry, and behaved himself like the rest of the company; and living many years after, continued in the same health which he had gained. The aforesaid abbot says this miracle was not wrought in his presence, but that he had it from those who were present.

CHAP. 6

Neque hoc praetereundum silentio, quod famulus Christi Heribald in se ipso ab eo factum solet narrare miraculum, qui tunc quidem in clero illius conuersatus, nunc monasterio, quod est iuxta ostium Tini fluminis, abbatis iure praeest. ‘Uitam,’

inquit, ‘illius, quantum hominibus aestimare fas est, quod praesens optime cognoui, per omnia episcopo dignam esse conperi. Sed et cuius meriti apud internum testem habitus sit, et in multis aliis, et in me ipso maxime expertus sum; quippe quem ab ipso, ut ita dicam, mortis limite reuocans, ad uiam uitae sua oratione ac benedictione reduxit. Nam cum primaeuo adulescentiae tempore in clero illius degerem, legendi quidem canendique studiis traditus, sed non adhuc animum perfecte a iuuenilibus cohibens inlecebris, contigit die quadam nos iter agentes cum illo deuenisse in uiam planam et amplam, aptamque cursui equorum; coeperuntque iuuenes, qui cum ipso erant, maxime laici, postulare episcopum, ut cursu maiore equos suos inuicem probare liceret. At ille primo negauit, otiosum dicens esse, quod desiderabant; sed ad ultimum multorum unanima intentione deuictus: “Facite,” inquit, “si uultis, ita tamen, ut Herebald ab illo se certamine funditus absteineat.” Porro ipse diligentius obsecrans, ut et mihi certandi cum illis copia daretur, (fidebam namque equo, quem mihi ipse optimum donauerat), nequaquam inpetrare potui.

‘At cum saepius huc atque illuc, spectante me et episcopo, concitatis in cursum equis reuerterentur; et ipse lasciuo superatus animo non me potui cohibere, sed, prohibente licet illo, ludentibus me miscui, et simul cursu equi contendere coepi. Quod dum agerem, audiui illum post tergum mihi cum gemitu dicentem: “O quam magnum uae facis mihi sic equitando!” Et ego audiens, nihilominus coeptis institi uetitis. Nec mora, dum feruens equus quoddam itineris concauum ualentiore impetu transiliret, lapsus decidi, et mox uelut emoriens sensum penitus motumque omnem perdi. Erat namque illo in loco lapis terrae aequalis obtectus cespite tenui, neque ullus alter in tota illa campi planitie lapis inueniri poterat; casuque euenit, uel potius diuina prouisione ad puniendam inoboedientiae meae culpam, ut hunc capite ac manu, quam capiti ruens subposueram, tangerem, atque infracto pollice capitis quoque iunctura solueretur;

et ego, ut dixi, simillimus mortuo fierem. Et quia moueri non poteram, tetenderunt ibidem papilionem, in quo iacerem. Erat autem hora diei circiter septima, a qua ad uesperam usque quietus et quasi mortuus permanens, tunc paululum reuiuisco, ferorque domum a sociis, ac tacitus tota nocte perduro. Uomebam autem sanguinem, eo quod et interanea essent ruendo conuulsa. At episcopus grauissime de casu et interitu meo dolebat, eo quod me speciali diligeret affectu; nec uoluit nocte illa iuxta morem cum clericis suis manere,

uerum solus in oratione persistens noctem ducebat peruigilem, pro mea, ut reor, sospitate supernae pietati supplicans. Et mane primo ingressus ad me, ac dicta super me oratione, uocauit me nomine meo, et quasi de somno graui excitatum interrogauit, si nossem, quis esset, qui loqueretur ad me. At ego aperiens oculos aio: “Etiam; tu es antistes meus amatus.” “Potes,” inquit, “uiuere?” Et ego: “Possum,”

inquam, “per orationes uestras, si uoluerit Dominus.”

‘Qui inponens capiti meo manum, cum uerbis benedictionis, rediit ad orandum; et post pusillum me reuisens, inuenit sedentem, et iam loqui ualentem; coepitque me interrogare, diuino, ut mox patuit, admonitus instinctu, an me esse baptizatum absque scrupulo nossem. Cui ego absque ulla me hoc dubietate scire respondi, quia salutari fonte in remissionem peccatorum essem ablutus; et nomen presbyteri, a quo me baptizatum noueram, dixi. At ille: “Si ab hoc,”

inquit, “sacerdote baptizatus es, non es perfecte baptizatus; noui namque eum, et quia cum esset presbyter ordinatus, nullatenus propter ingenii tarditatem potuit cathecizandi uel baptizandi ministerium discere, propter quod et ipse illum ab huius praesumptione ministerii, quod regulariter implere nequibat, omnimodis cessare praecepi.” Quibus dictis eadem hora me cathecizare ipse curauit; factumque est, ut, exsufflante illo in faciem meam, confestim me melius habere sentirem. Uocauit autem medicum, et dissolutam mihi emicranii iuncturam componere atque alligare iussit.

Tantumque mox accepta eius benedictione conualui, ut in crastinum ascendens equum cum ipso iter in alium locum facerem; nec multo post plene curatus uitali etiam unda perfusus sum.’

Mansit autem in episcopatu annis XXXIII, et sic caelestia regna conscendens, sepultus est in porticu sancti Petri in monasterio suo, quod dicitur In silua Derorum, anno ab incarnatione dominica DCCo XXIo. Nam cum prae maiore senectute minus episcopatui administrando sufficeret, ordinato in episcopatum Eboracensis ecclesiae Uilfrido presbytero suo, secessit ad monasterium praefatum, ibique uitam in Deo digna conuersatione conpleuit.

Chap. VI.

How, both by his prayers and blessing, he recalled from death one of his clerks, who had bruised himself by a fall.

Nor do I think that this miracle, which Herebald, the servant of Christ, says was wrought upon himself by the bishop, is to be passed over in silence. He was then one of that bishop’s clergy, but now presides as abbot in the monastery at the mouth of the river Tyne. “Living with him,” said he, “and being very well acquainted with his course of life, I found it to be in all points

worthy of a bishop, as far as it is lawful for men to judge; but I have known by the experience of others, and more particularly by my own, how great his merit was before Him Who seeth the heart; having been by his prayer and blessing recalled from the threshold of death and brought back to the way of life. For, when in the prime of my youth, I lived among his clergy, applying myself to reading and singing, but not having yet altogether withdrawn my heart from youthful pleasures, it happened one day that, as we were travelling with him, we came into a plain and open road, well fitted for galloping. The young men that were with him, and especially the laymen, began to entreat the bishop to give them leave to gallop, and make trial of their horses one with another. He at first refused, saying that it was an idle request; but at last, overcome by the unanimous desire of so many, ‘Do so,’ said he, ‘if you will, but let Herebald have no part in the trial.’ Then I earnestly prayed that I might have leave to compete with the rest, for I relied on an excellent horse, which he had himself given me, but I could in no wise obtain my request.

“When they had several times galloped backwards and forwards, the bishop and I looking on, my wanton humour prevailed, and I could no longer refrain, but though he forbade me, I struck in among them at their sport, and began to ride with them at full speed; whereat I heard him call after me with a groan, ‘Alas! how much you grieve me by riding after that manner.’ Though I heard him, I went on against his command; but immediately the fiery horse taking a great leap over a hollow place in the way, I fell, and at once lost all sense and motion, like one dying; for there was in that place a stone, level with the ground, covered with only a thin coating of turf, and no other stone was to be found in all that expanse of plain; and it happened by chance, or rather by Divine Providence so ordering it, to punish my disobedience, that my head and my hand, which in falling I had put under my head, struck upon that stone, so that my thumb was broken and my skull fractured, and I became, as I said, like one dead.

“And because I could not move, they stretched a tent there for me to lie in. It was about the seventh hour of the day, and having lain still and as it were dead from that time till the evening, I then revived a little, and was carried home by my companions, and lay speechless all the night, vomiting blood, because something was broken within me by the fall. The bishop was very much grieved at my fall and my misfortune, for he bore me extraordinary affection. Nor would he stay that night, as he was wont, among his clergy; but spent it alone in watching and prayer, imploring the Divine goodness, as I suppose, for my preservation. Coming to me early in the morning, and having said a prayer over me, he called me by my name, and when I awoke as it were out of a heavy sleep, he asked whether I knew who it was that spoke to me? I opened my eyes and said, ‘Yes; you are my beloved bishop.’— ‘Can you live?’ said he. I answered, ‘I can, through your prayers, if the Lord will.’

“He then laid his hand on my head, with the words of blessing, and

returned to prayer; when he came again to see me, in a short time, he found me sitting and able to talk; and, being moved by Divine inspiration, as it soon appeared, began to ask me, whether I knew for certain that I had been baptized? I answered that I knew beyond all doubt that I had been washed in the font of salvation, for the remission of sins, and I named the priest by whom I knew that I had been baptized. He replied, ‘If you were baptized by that priest, your baptism is not perfect; for I know him, and that when he was ordained priest, he could in no wise, by reason of the dulness of his understanding, learn the ministry of catechizing and baptizing; for which reason I enjoined upon him altogether to desist from presuming to exercise that ministry, which he could not duly perform.’ This said, he set himself to catechize me that same hour; and it came to pass that when he breathed on my face, straightway I felt better. He called the surgeon and ordered him to set and bind up my skull where it was fractured; and presently having received his blessing, I was so much better that I mounted on horseback the next day, and travelled with him to another place; and being soon after perfectly recovered, I was washed in the water of life.”

He continued in his bishopric thirty-three years, and then ascending to the heavenly kingdom, was buried in St. Peter’s Chapel, in his own monastery, which is called, “In the wood of the Deiri,” in the year of our Lord 721. For having, by his great age, become unable to govern his bishopric, he ordained Wilfrid, his priest, bishop of the church of York, and retired to the aforesaid monastery, and there ended his days in godly conversation.

CHAP. 7

Anno autem regni Aldfridi tertio, Caedualia, rex Occidentalium Saxonum, cum genti suae duobus annis strenuissime praeesset, relicto imperio propter Dominum regnumque perpetuum, uenit Romam; hoc sibi gloriae singularis desiderans adipisci, ut ad limina beatorum apostolorum fonte baptismatis ablueretur, in quo solo didicerat generi humano patere uitae caelestis introitum; simul etiam sperans, quia mox baptizatus, carne solutus ad aeterna gaudia iam mundus transiret; quod utrumque, ut mente disposuerat, Domino iuuante completum est. Etenim illo perueniens, pontificatum agente Sergio, baptizatus est die sancto sabbati paschalis anno ab incarnatione Domini DCLXXXVIII; et in albis adhuc positus, langore correptus, XIIo. Kalendarum Maiarum die solutus a carne, et beatorum est regno sociatus in caelis. Cui etiam tempore baptismatis papa memoratus Petri nomen inposuerat, ut beatissimo apostolorum principi, ad cuius sacratissimum corpus a finibus terrae pio ductus amore uenerat, etiam nominis ipsius consortio iungeretur; qui in eius quoque ecclesia sepultus est; et iubente pontifice epitaphium in eius monumento scriptum, in quo et memoria deuotionis ipsius fixa per saecula maneret, et legentes quoque uel audientes exemplum facti ad studium religionis accenderet. Scriptum est ergo hoc modo:

Culmen, opes, subolem, pollentia regna, triumphos, Exuias, procures, moenia, castra, lares; Quaeque patrum uirtus, et quae congesserat ipse Caedual armipotens, liquit amore Dei;

Ut Petrum, sedemque Petri rex cerneret hospes, Cuius fonte meras sumeret almus aquas, Splendificumque iubar radianti carperet haustu, Ex quo uiuificus fulgor ubique fluit.

Percipiensque alacer rediuiuae praemia uitae, Barbaricam rabiem, nomen et inde suum Conuersus conuertit ouans; Petrumque uocari Sergius antistes iussit, ut ipse pater Fonte renascentis, quem Christi gratia purgans Protinus albatum uexit in arce poli.

Mira fides regis, clementia maxima Christi, Cuius consilium nullus adire potest!

Sospes enim ueniens supremo ex orbe Britanni, Per uarias gentes, per freta, perque uias, Urbem Romuleam uidit, templumque uerendum Aspexit Petri mystica dona gerens.

Candidus inter oues Christi sociabilis ibit; Corpore nam tumulum, mente superna tenet.

Conmutasse magis sceptrorum insignia credas, Quem regnum Christi promeruisse uides.

Hic depositus est Caedual, qui et Petrus, rex Saxonum, sub die XII

Kalendarum Maiarum, indictione II; qui uixit annos plus minus XXX, imperante domno Iustiniano piissimo Augusto, anno eius consulatus IIII, pontificante apostolico uiro domno Sergio papa anno secundo.

Abeunte autem Romam Caedwalla, successit in regnum Ini de stirpe regia; qui cum XXXVII annis imperium tenuisset gentis illius, et ipse relicto regno ac iuuenioribus commendato, ad limina beatorum apostolorum Gregorio pontificatum tenente profectus est, cupiens in uicinia sanctorum locorum ad tempus peregrinari in terris, quo familiarius a sanctis recipi mereretur in caelis; quod his temporibus plures de gente Anglorum, nobiles, ignobiles, laici, clerici, uiri ac feminae certatim facere consuerunt.

Chap. VII.

How Caedwalla, king of the West Saxons, went to Rome to be baptized; and his successor Ini, also devoutly journeyed to the same threshold of the holy Apostles. [688 a.d.]

In the third year of the reign of Aldfrid, Caedwalla, king of the West Saxons, having most vigorously governed his nation for two years, quitted his crown for the sake of the Lord and an everlasting kingdom, and went to Rome, being desirous to obtain the peculiar honour of being cleansed in the baptismal font at the threshold of the blessed Apostles, for he had learned that in Baptism alone the entrance into the heavenly life is opened to mankind; and he hoped at the same time, that being made clean by Baptism, he should soon be freed from the bonds of the flesh and pass to the eternal joys of Heaven; both which things, by the help of the Lord, came to pass according as he had conceived in his mind. For coming to Rome, at the time that Sergius was pope, he was baptized on the Holy Saturday before Easter Day, in the year of our Lord 689, and being still in his white garments, he fell sick, and was set free from the bonds of the flesh on the 20th of April, and obtained an entrance into the kingdom of the blessed in Heaven. At his baptism, the aforesaid pope had given him the name of Peter, to the end, that he might be also united in name to the most blessed chief of the Apostles, to whose most holy body his pious love had led him from the utmost bounds of the earth. He was likewise buried in his church, and by the pope's command an epitaph was written on his tomb, wherein the memory of his devotion might be preserved for ever, and the readers or hearers thereof might be stirred up to give themselves to religion by the example of what he had done.

The epitaph was this: —

“High estate, wealth, offspring, a mighty kingdom, triumphs, spoils, chieftains, strongholds, the camp, a home; whatsoever the valour of his sires, whatsoever himself had won, Caedwal, mighty in war, left for the love of God, that, a pilgrim king, he might behold Peter and Peter's seat, receive at his font pure waters of life, and in bright draughts drink of the shining

radiance whence a quickening glory streams through all the world. And even as he gained with eager soul the prize of the new life, he laid aside barbaric rage, and, changed in heart, he changed his name with joy. Sergius the Pope bade him be called Peter, himself his father, when he rose born anew from the font, and the grace of Christ, cleansing him, bore him forthwith clothed in white raiment to the heights of Heaven. O wondrous faith of the king, but greatest of all the mercy of Christ, into whose counsels none may enter! For he came in safety from the ends of the earth, even from Britain, through many a nation, over many a sea, by many a path, and saw the city of Romulus and looked upon Peter's sanctuary revered, bearing mystic gifts. He shall walk in white among the sheep of Christ in fellowship with them; for his body is in the tomb, but his soul on high. Thou mightest deem he did but change an earthly for a heavenly sceptre, whom thou seest attain to the kingdom of Christ."

"Here was buried Caedwalla, called also Peter, king of the Saxons, on the twentieth day of April, in the second indiction, aged about thirty years, in the reign of our most pious lord, the Emperor Justinian, in the fourth year of his consulship, in the second year of the pontificate of our Apostolic lord, Pope Sergius."

When Caedwalla went to Rome, Ini succeeded to the kingdom, being of the blood royal; and having reigned thirty-seven years over that nation, he in like manner left his kingdom and committed it to younger men, and went away to the threshold of the blessed Apostles, at the time when Gregory was pope, being desirous to spend some part of his pilgrimage upon earth in the neighbourhood of the holy places, that he might obtain to be more readily received into the fellowship of the saints in heaven. This same thing, about that time, was wont to be done most zealously by many of the English nation, nobles and commons, laity and clergy, men and women.

CHAP. 8

Anno autem post hunc, quo Caedualla Romae defunctus est, proximo, id est DCXC incarnationis dominicae, Theodorus beatae memoriae archiepiscopus, senex et plenus dierum, id est annorum LXXXVIII, defunctus est; quem se numerum annorum fuisse habiturum ipse iamdudum somni reuelatione edoctus, suis praedicere solebat.

Mansit autem in episcopatu annis XXII, sepultusque est in ecclesia sancti Petri, in qua omnium episcoporum Doruuernensium sunt corpora deposita; de quo una cum consortibus eiusdem sui gradus recte ac ueraciter dici potest, quia 'corpora ipsorum in pace sepulta sunt, et nomen eorum uiuet in generationes et generationes.' Ut enim breuiter dicam, tantum profectus spiritalis tempore praesulatus illius Anglorum ecclesiae, quantum numquam antea potuere, ceperunt.

Cuius personam, uitam, aetatem, et obitum, epitaphium quoque monumenti ipsius uersibus heroicis XXX et IIII palam ac lucide cunctis illo aduenientibus pandit; quorum primi sunt hi:

Hic sacer in tumba pausat cum corpore pracsul, Quem nunc Theodorum lingua Pelasga uocat.

Princeps pontificum, felix summusque sacerdos Limpida discipulis dogmata disseruit.

Ultimi autem hi:

Namque diem nonamdecimam September habebat, Cum carnis claustra spiritus egreditur.

Alma nouae scandens felix consortia uitae, Cuiibus angelicis iunctus in arce poli.

Successit autem Theodoro in episcopatum Berctuald, qui erat abbas in monasterio, quod iuxta ostium aquilonale fluminis Genladae positum, Racuulfe nuncupatur; uir et ipse scientia scripturarum inbutus, sed et ecclesiasticis simul ac monasterialibus disciplinis summe instructus, tametsi praedecessori suo minime conparandus; qui electus est quidem in episcopatum anno dominicae incarnationis DCXC secundo, die primo mensis Iulii, regnantibus in Cantia Uictredo et SuÃ¡bhardo; ordinatus autem anno sequente tertio die Kalendarum Iuliarum dominica a Goduine metropolitano episcopo Galliarum; et sedit in sede sua pridie Kalendarum Septembrium dominica; qui inter multos, quos ordinauit antistites, etiam Gebmundo Hrofensis ecclesiae praesule defuncto, Tobiam pro illo consecrauit, uirum Latina, Greca, et Saxonica lingua atque eruditione multipliciter instructum.

Chap. VIII.

How, when Archbishop Theodore died, Bertwald succeeded him as archbishop, and, among many others whom he ordained, he made the learned Tobias bishop of the church of Rochester. [690 a.d.]

The year after that in which Caedwalla died at Rome, that is, 690 after the Incarnation of our Lord, Archbishop Theodore, of blessed memory, departed this life, being old and full of days, for he was eighty-eight years of age; which number of years he had been wont long before to foretell to his friends that he should live, the same having been revealed to him in a dream. He held the bishopric twenty-two years, and was buried in St. Peter's church, where all the bodies of the bishops of Canterbury are buried. Of whom, as well as of his fellows of the same degree, it may rightly and truly be said, that their bodies are buried in peace, and their names shall live to all generations. For to say all in few words, the English Churches gained more spiritual increase while he was archbishop, than ever before. His character, life, age, and death, are plainly and manifestly described to all that resort thither, by the epitaph on his tomb, in thirty-four heroic verses. The first whereof are these:

“Here in the tomb rests the body of the holy prelate, called now in the Greek tongue Theodore. Chief pontiff, blest high priest, pure doctrine he set forth to his disciples.”

The last are as follow:

“For September had reached its nineteenth day, when his spirit went forth from the prison-bars of the flesh. Mounting in bliss to the gracious fellowship of the new life, he was united to the angelic citizens in the heights of Heaven.”

Bertwald succeeded Theodore in the archbishopric, being abbot of the monastery called Racuulfe, which stands at the northern mouth of the river Genlade. He was a man learned in the Scriptures, and perfectly instructed in ecclesiastical and monastic teaching, yet in no wise to be compared to his predecessor. He was chosen bishop in the year of our Lord 692, on the first day of July, when Wictred and Suaebhard were kings in Kent; but he was ordained the next year, on Sunday the 29th of June, by Godwin, metropolitan bishop of Gaul, and was enthroned on Sunday the 31st of August. Among the many bishops whom he ordained was Tobias, a man instructed in the Latin, Greek, and Saxon tongues, and otherwise of manifold learning, whom he consecrated in the stead of Gedmund, bishop of the Church of Rochester, who had died.

CHAP. 9

Eo tempore uenerabilis et cum omni honorificentia nominandus famulus Christi et sacerdos Ecgberct, quem in Hibernia insula peregrinam ducere uitam pro adipiscenda in caelis patria retulimus, proposuit animo pluribus prodesse; id est inito opere apostolico, uerbum Dei aliquibus earum, quae nondum audierant, gentibus euangelizando committere; quarum in Germania plurimas nouerat esse nationes, a quibus Angli uel Saxones, qui nunc Britanniam incolunt, genus et originem duxisse noscuntur; unde hactenus a uicina gente Brettonum corrupte Garmani nuncupantur. Sunt autem Fresones, Rugini, Danai, Hunni, Antiqui Saxones, Boructuari; sunt alii perplures hisdem in partibus populi paganis adhuc ritibus seruientes, ad quos uenire praefatus Christi miles circumnauigata Brittania disposuit, siquos forte ex illis ereptos Satanae ad Christum transferre ualeret; uel, si hoc fieri non posset, Romam uenire ad uidenda atque adoranda beatorum apostolorum ac martyrum Christi limina cogitauit.

Sed ne aliquid horum perficeret, superna illa oracula simul et opera restiterunt. Siquidem electis sociis strenuissimis et ad praedicandum uerbum idoneis, utpote actione simul et eruditione praeclaris, praeparatis omnibus, quae nauigantibus esse necessaria uidebantur, uenit die quadam mane primo ad eum unus de fratribus, discipulus quondam in Brittania et minister Deo dilecti sacerdotis Boisili (cum esset idem Boisil praepositus monasterii Mailrosensis sub abbate Eata, ut supra narrauimus, referens ei uisionem, quae sibi eadem nocte apparuisset: ‘Cum expletis,’ inquit, ‘hymnis matutinalibus in lectulo membra posuissem, ac leuis mihi somnus obrepisset, apparuit magister quondam meus, et nutritor amantissimus Boisil, interrogauitque me, an eum cognoscere possem. Aio: “Etiam; tu es enim Boisil.” At ille: “Ad hoc,” inquit, “ueni, ut responsum Domini Saluatoris Ecgbercto adferam, quod te tamen referente oportet ad illum uenire. Dic ergo illi, quia non ualet iter, quod proposuit, implere; Dei enim uoluntatis est, ut ad Columbae monasteria magis docenda pergat.”’ Erat autem Columba primus doctor fidei Christianae transmontanis Pictis ad aquilonem, primusque fundator monasterii, quod in Hii insula multis diu Scottorum Pictorumque populis uenerabile mansit. Qui uidelicet Columba nunc a nonnullis composito a cella et Columba nomine Columcelli uocatur. Audiens autem uerba uisionis Ecgberct, praecepit fratri, qui retulerat, ne cuiquam haec alteri referret, ne forte inlusoria esset uisio. Ipse autem tacitus rem considerans, ueram esse timebat; nec tamen a praeparando itinere, quo ad gentes docendas iret, cessare uolebat.

At post dies paucos rursum uenit ad eum praefatus frater, dicens, quia et ea nocte sibi post expletos matutinos Boisil per uisum apparuerit, dicens: ‘Quare tam negligenter ac tepide dixisti Ecgbercto, quae tibi dicenda praecepi? At nunc uade et dic illi, quia, uelit nolit, debet ad monasteria Columbae uenire, quia aratra eorum non recte incedunt; oportet autem eum ad rectum haec

tramitem reuocare.’ Qui haec audiens denuo praecepit fratri, ne haec cui patefaceret. Ipse uero, tametsi certus est factus de uisione, nihilominus temptauit iter dispositum cum fratribus memoratis incipere. Cumque iam naui inposuissent, quae tanti itineris necessitas poscebat, atque oportunos aliquot dies uentos expectarent, facta est nocte quadam tam saeua tempestas, quae perditis nonnulla ex parte his, quae in naui erant, rebus, ipsam in latus iacentem inter undas relinqueret; saluata sunt tamen omnia, quae erant Ecgbercti et sociorum eius. Tum ipse quasi propheticum illud dicens, quia ‘propter me est tempestas haec,’ subtraxit se illi profectioni, et remanere domi passus est.

At uero unus de sociis eius, uocabulo Uictberct, cum esset et ipse contemptu mundi ac doctrinae scientia insignis, (nam multos annos in Hibernia peregrinus anchoreticam in magna perfectione uitam egerat), ascendit nauem, et Fresiam perueniens, duobus annis continuis genti illi ac regi eius Rathbedo uerbum salutis praedicabat, neque aliquem tanti laboris fructum apud barbaros inuenit auditores. Tum reuersus ad dilectae locum peregrinationis, solito in silentio uacare Domino coepit; et quoniam externis prodesse ad fidem non poterat, suis amplius ex uirtutum exemplis prodesse curabat.

Chap. IX.

How the holy man, Egbert, would have gone into Germany to preach, but could not; and how Wictbert went, but because he availed nothing, returned into Ireland, whence he came. [Circ. 688 a.d.]

At that time the venerable servant of Christ, and priest, Egbert, who is to be named with all honour, and who, as was said before, lived as a stranger and pilgrim in Ireland to obtain hereafter a country in heaven, purposed in his mind to profit many, taking upon him the work of an apostle, and, by preaching the Gospel, to bring the Word of God to some of those nations that had not yet heard it; many of which tribes he knew to be in Germany, from whom the Angles or Saxons, who now inhabit Britain, are known to have derived their race and origin; for which reason they are still corruptly called “Garmans” by the neighbouring nation of the Britons. Such are the Frisians, the Rugini, the Danes, the Huns, the Old Saxons, and the Boructuari. There are also in the same parts many other peoples still enslaved to pagan rites, to whom the aforesaid soldier of Christ determined to go, sailing round Britain, if haply he could deliver any of them from Satan, and bring them to Christ; or if this might not be, he was minded to go to Rome, to see and adore the thresholds of the holy Apostles and martyrs of Christ.

But a revelation from Heaven and the working of God prevented him from achieving either of these enterprises; for when he had made choice of most courageous companions, fit to preach the Word, inasmuch as they were renowned for their good deeds and their learning, and when all things

necessary were provided for the voyage, there came to him on a certain day early in the morning one of the brethren, who had been a disciple of the priest, Boisil, beloved of God, and had ministered to him in Britain, when the said Boisil was provost of the monastery of Mailros, under the Abbot Eata, as has been said above. This brother told him a vision which he had seen that night. "When after matins," said he, "I had laid me down in my bed, and was fallen into a light slumber, Boisil, that was sometime my master and brought me up in all love, appeared to me, and asked, whether I knew him? I said, 'Yes, you are Boisil.' He answered, 'I am come to bring Egbert a message from our Lord and Saviour, which must nevertheless be delivered to him by you. Tell him, therefore, that he cannot perform the journey he has undertaken; for it is the will of God that he should rather go to teach the monasteries of Columba.' " Now Columba was the first teacher of the Christian faith to the Picts beyond the mountains northward, and the first founder of the monastery in the island of Hii, which was for a long time much honoured by many tribes of the Scots and Picts. The said Columba is now by some called Columcille, the name being compounded from "Columba" and "Cella." Egbert, having heard the words of the vision, charged the brother that had told it him, not to tell it to any other, lest haply it should be a lying vision. But when he considered the matter secretly with himself, he apprehended that it was true, yet would not desist from preparing for his voyage which he purposed to make to teach those nations.

A few days after the aforesaid brother came again to him, saying that Boisil had that night again appeared to him in a vision after matins, and said, "Why did you tell Egbert so negligently and after so lukewarm a manner that which I enjoined upon you to say? Yet, go now and tell him, that whether he will or no, he must go to Columba's monasteries, because their ploughs are not driven straight; and he must bring them back into the right way." Hearing this, Egbert again charged the brother not to reveal the same to any man. Though now assured of the vision, he nevertheless attempted to set forth upon his intended voyage with the brethren. When they had put aboard all that was requisite for so long a voyage, and had waited some days for fair winds, there arose one night so violent a storm, that part of what was on board was lost, and the ship itself was left lying on its side in the sea. Nevertheless, all that belonged to Egbert and his companions was saved. Then he, saying, in the words of the prophet, "For my sake this great tempest is upon you," withdrew himself from that undertaking and was content to remain at home.

But one of his companions, called Wictbert, notable for his contempt of the world and for his learning and knowledge, for he had lived many years as a stranger and pilgrim in Ireland, leading a hermit's life in great perfection, took ship, and arriving in Frisland, preached the Word of salvation for the space of two whole years to that nation and to its king, Rathbed; but reaped no fruit of all his great labour among his barbarous hearers. Returning then to the chosen

place of his pilgrimage, he gave himself up to the Lord in his wonted life of silence, and since he could not be profitable to strangers by teaching them the faith, he took care to be the more profitable to his own people by the example of his virtue.

CHAP. 10

Ut autem uidit uir Domini Ecgberct, quia nec ipse ad praedicandum gentibus uenire permittebatur, retentus ob aliam sanctae ecclesiae utilitatem, de qua oraculo fuerat praemonitus; nec Uictberct illas deueniens in partes quicquam proficiebat, temtauit adhuc in opus uerbi mittere uiros sanctos et industrios, in quibus eximius Uilbrord presbyteri gradu et merito praefulgebat. Qui cum illo aduenissent, erant autem numero XII, diuertentes ad Pippinum ducem Francorum, gratanter ab illo suscepti sunt; et quia nuper citeriorem Fresiam expulso inde Rathbedo rege ceperat, illo eos ad praedicandum misit; ipse quoque imperiali auctoritate iuuans, ne qui praedicantibus quicquam molestiae inferret; multisque eos, qui fidem suscipere uellent, beneficiis adtollens; unde factum est, opitulante gratia diuina, ut multos in breui ab idolatria ad fidem conuerterent Christi.

Horum secuti exempla duo quidam presbyteri de natione Anglorum, qui in Hibernia multo tempore pro aeterna patria exulauerant, uenerunt ad prouinciam Antiquorum Saxonum, si forte aliquos ibidem praedicando Christo adquirere possent. Erant autem unius ambo, sicut deuotionis, sic etiam uocabuli; nam uterque eorum appellabatur Heuuald; ea tamen distinctione, ut pro diuersa capillorum specie unus Niger Heuuald, alter Albus Heuuald diceretur; quorum uterque pietate religionis inbutus, sed Niger Heuuald magis sacrarum litterarum erat scientia institutus. Qui uenientes in prouinciam intrauerunt hospitium cuiusdam uilici, petieruntque ab eo, ut transmitterentur ad satrapam, qui super eum erat, eo quod haberent aliquid legationis et causae utilis, quod deberent ad illum perferre. Non enim habent regem idem Antiqui Saxones, sed satrapas plurimos suae genti praepositos, qui ingruente belli articulo mittunt aequaliter sortes, et, quemcumque sors ostenderit, hunc tempore belli ducem omnes sequuntur, huic obtemperant; peracto autem bello, rursum aequalis potentiae omnes fiunt satrapae. Suscepit ergo eos uilicus, et promittens se mittere eos ad satrapam, qui super se erat, ut petebant, aliquot diebus secum retinuit.

Qui cum cogniti essent a barbaris, quod essent alterius religionis, (nam et psalmis semper atque orationibus uacabant, et cotidie sacrificium Deo uictimae salutaris offerebant, habentes secum uascula sacra et tabulam altaris uice dedicatam), suspecti sunt habiti, quia, si peruenirent ad satrapam, et loquerentur cum illo, auerterent illum a diis suis, et ad nouam Christianae fidei religionem transferrent, sicque paulatim omnis eorum prouincia ueterem cogeretur noua mutare culturam. Itaque rapuerunt eos subito, et interemerunt; Album quidem Heuualdum ueloci occisione gladii, Nigellum autem longo suppliciorum cruciatu, et horrenda membrorum omnium discriptione; quos interemtis in Rheno proiecerunt. Quod cum satrapa ille, quem uidere uolebant, audisset, iratus est ualde, quod ad se uenire uolentes peregrini non permitterentur; et mittens occidit uicanos illos omnes, uicumque incendio

consumsit. Passi sunt autem praefati sacerdotes et famuli Christi Vo. Nonarum Octobrium die.

Nec martyrio eorum caelestia defuere miracula. Nam cum peremta eorum corpora amni, ut diximus, a paganis essent iniecta, contigit, ut haec contra impetum fluuii decurrentis, per XL fere milia passuum, ad ea usque loca, ubi illorum erant socii, transferrentur. Sed et radius lucis permaximus, atque ad caelum usque altus, omni nocte supra locum fulgebat illum, ubicumque ea peruenisse contingeret, et hoc etiam pagani, qui eos occiderant, intuentibus. Sed et unus ex eis in uisione nocturna apparuit cuidam de sociis suis, cui nomen erat Tilmon, uiro inlustri, et ad saeculum quoque nobili, qui de milite factus fuerat monachus; indicans, quod eo loci corpora eorum posset inuenire, ubi lucem de caelo terris radiasse conspiceret.

Quod ita completum est. Inuenta namque eorum corpora iuxta honorem martyribus condignum recondita sunt, et dies passionis uel inuentionis eorum congrua illis in locis ueneratione celebratus. Denique gloriosissimus dux Francorum Pippin, ubi haec conperiit, misit, et adducta ad se eorum corpora condidit cum multa gloria in ecclesia Coloniae ciuitatis iuxta Rhenum. Fertur autem, quia in loco, quo occisi sunt, fons ebullierit, qui in eodem loco usque hodie copiosa fluenti sui dona profundat.

Chap. X.

How Wilbrord, preaching in Frisland, converted many to Christ; and how his two companions, the Hewalds, suffered martyrdom. [690 a.d.]

When the man of God, Egbert, perceived that neither he himself was permitted to go and preach to the nations, being withheld for the sake of some other advantage to the holy Church, whereof he had been forewarned by a revelation; nor that Wicbert, when he went into those parts, had availed to do anything; he nevertheless still attempted to send holy and industrious men to the work of the Word, among whom the most notable was Wilbrord, a man eminent for his merit and rank as priest. They arrived there, twelve in number, and turning aside to Pippin, duke of the Franks, were gladly received by him; and as he had lately subdued the nearer part of Frisland, and expelled King Rathbed, he sent them thither to preach, supporting them at the same time with his sovereign authority, that none might molest them in their preaching, and bestowing many favours on those who consented to receive the faith. Thus it came to pass, that with the help of the Divine grace, in a short time they converted many from idolatry to the faith of Christ.

Following their example, two other priests of the English nation, who had long lived as strangers in Ireland, for the sake of the eternal country, went into the province of the Old Saxons, if haply they could there win any to Christ by their preaching. They were alike in name as in devotion, Hewald being the name of both, with this distinction, that, on account of the different colour of

their hair, the one was called Black Hewald and the other White Hewald. They were both full of religious piety, but Black Hewald was the more learned of the two in Scripture. When they came into the province, these men took up their lodging in the guesthouse of a certain township-reeve, and asked of him that he would conduct them to the ealdorman who was over him, for that they had a message concerning matters of importance to communicate to him. For those Old Saxons have no king, but many ealdormen set over their nation; and when any war is on the point of breaking out, they cast lots indifferently, and on whomsoever the lot falls, him they all follow and obey during the time of war; but as soon as the war is ended, all those ealdormen are again equal in power. So the reeve received and entertained them in his house some days, promising to send them to the ealdorman who was over him, as they desired.

But when the barbarians perceived that they were of another religion, — for they continually gave themselves to singing of psalms and prayer, and daily offered up to God the Sacrifice of the saving Victim, having with them sacred vessels and a consecrated table for an altar, — they began to grow suspicious of them, lest if they should come into the presence of their ealdorman, and converse with him, they should turn his heart from their gods, and convert him to the new religion of the Christian faith; and thus by degrees all their province should be forced to change its old worship for a new. Wherefore on a sudden they laid hold of them and put them to death; and White Hewald they slew outright with the sword; but they put Black Hewald to lingering torture and tore him limb from limb in horrible fashion, and they threw their bodies into the Rhine. The ealdorman, whom they had desired to see, hearing of it, was very angry that strangers who desired to come to him had not been suffered to come; and therefore he sent and put to death all those villagers and burned their village. The aforesaid priests and servants of Christ suffered on the 3rd of October.

Miracles from Heaven were not lacking at their martyrdom. For their dead bodies, having been cast into the river by the pagans, as has been said, were carried against the stream for the space of almost forty miles, to the place where their companions were. Moreover, a long ray of light, reaching up to heaven, shone every night above them wheresoever they chanced to be, and that too in the sight of the very pagans that had slain them. Moreover, one of them appeared in a vision by night to one of his companions, whose name was Tilmon, a man of renown and of noble birth in this world, who having been a thegn had become a monk, telling him that he might find their bodies in that place, where he should see rays of light reaching from heaven to the earth. And so it befell; and their bodies being found, were buried with the honour due to martyrs; and the day of their passion or of the finding of their bodies, is celebrated in those parts with fitting veneration. Finally, Pippin, the most glorious duke of the Franks, learning these things, caused the bodies to be

brought to him, and buried them with much honour in the church of the city of Cologne, on the Rhine. And it is said that a spring burst forth in the place where they were killed, which to this day affords a plentiful stream in that same place.

CHAP. 11

Primis sane temporibus aduentus eorum in Fresiam, mox ut conperiit Uilbrord datam sibi a principe licentiam ibidem praedicandi, accelerauit uenire Romam, cuius sedi apostolicae tunc Sergius papa praeerat, ut cum eius licentia et benedictione desideratum euangelizandi gentibus opus iniret; simul et reliquias beatorum apostolorum ac martyrum Christi ab eo se sperans accipere, ut dum in gente, cui praedicaret, destructis idolis ecclesias institueret, haberet in promptu reliquias sanctorum, quas ibi introduceret; quibusque ibidem depositis, consequenter in eorum honorem, quorum essent illae, singula quaeque loca dedicaret. Sed et alia perplura, quae tanti operis negotium quaerebat, uel ibi discere uel inde accipere cupiebat. In quibus omnibus cum sui uoti compos esset effectus, ad praedicandum rediit.

Quo tempore fratres, qui erant in Fresia uerbi ministerio mancipati, elegerunt ex suo numero uirum modestum moribus, et mansuetum corde, Suidberctum, qui eis ordinaretur antistes, quem Britanniam destinatum ad petitionem eorum ordinauit reuerentissimus Uilfrid episcopus, qui tum forte patria pulsus in Merciorum regionibus exulabat. Non enim eo tempore habebat episcopum Cantia, defuncto quidem Theodoro, sed necdum Berctualdo successore eius, qui trans mare ordinandus ierat, ad sedem episcopatus sui reuerso.

Qui uidelicet Suidberct accepto episcopatu, de Brittania regressus, non multo post ad gentem Boructuarorum secessit, ac multos eorum praedicando ad uiam ueritatis perduxit. Sed expugnatis non longo post tempore Boructuaris a gente Antiquorum Saxonum, dispersi sunt quolibet hi, qui uerbum receperant; ipse antistes cum quibusdam Pippinum petiit, qui interpellante Bliththrydae coniuge sua, dedit ei locum mansionis in insula quadam Hreni, quae lingua eorum uocatur In litore; in qua ipse, constructo monasterio, quod hactenus heredes possident eius, aliquandiu continentissimam gessit uitam, ibique diem clausit ultimum.

Postquam uero per annos aliquot in Fresia, qui aduenerant, docuerunt, misit Pippin fauente omnium consensu uirum uenerabilem Uilbrordum Romam, cuius adhuc pontificatum Sergius habebat, postulans. ut eidem Fresonum genti archiepiscopus ordinaretur. Quod ita, ut petierat, inpletum est, anno ab incarnatione Domini DCXCVI.

Ordinatus est autem in ecclesia sanctae martyris Ceciliae, die natalis eius, inposito sibi a papa memorato nomine Clementis; ac mox remissus ad sedem episcopatus sui, id est post dies XIII, ex quo in urbem uenerat.

Donauit autem ei Pippin locum cathedrae episcopalis in castello suo inlustri, quod antiquo gentium illarum uerbo Uiltaburg, id est Oppidum Uiltorum, lingua autem Gallica Traiectum uocatur; in quo aedificata ecclesia,

reuerentissimus pontifex longe lateque uerbum fidei praedicans, multosque ab errore reuocans, plures per illas regiones ecclesias, sed et monasteria nonnulla construxit. Nam non multo post alios quoque illis in regionibus ipse constituit antistites ex eorum numero fratrum, qui uel secum, uel post se illo ad praedicandum uenerant; ex quibus aliquanti iam dormierunt in Domino. Ipse autem Uilbrord, cognomento Clemens, adhuc superest, longa iam uenerabilis aetate, utpote tricesimum et sextum in episcopatu habens annum, et post multiplices militiae caelestis agones ad praemia remunerationis supernae tota mente suspirans.

Chap. XI.

How the venerable Suidbert in Britain, and Wilbrord at Rome, were ordained bishops for Frisland. [692 a.d.]

At their first coming into Frisland, as soon as Wilbrord found that he had leave given him by the prince to preach there, he made haste to go to Rome, where Pope Sergius then presided over the Apostolic see, that he might undertake the desired work of preaching the Gospel to the nations, with his licence and blessing; and hoping to receive of him some relics of the blessed Apostles and martyrs of Christ; to the end, that when he destroyed the idols, and erected churches in the nation to which he preached, he might have the relics of saints at hand to put into them, and having deposited them there, might accordingly dedicate each of those places to the honour of the saint whose relics they were. He desired also there to learn or to receive many other things needful for so great a work. Having obtained his desire in all these matters, he returned to preach.

At which time, the brothers who were in Frisland, attending on the ministry of the Word, chose out of their own number a man of sober life, and meek of heart, called Suidbert, to be ordained bishop for them. He, being sent into Britain, was consecrated, at their request, by the most reverend Bishop Wilfrid, who, having been driven out of his country, chanced then to be living in banishment among the Mercians; for Kent had no bishop at that time, Theodore being dead, and Bertwald, his successor, who had gone beyond the sea to be ordained, having not yet returned to his episcopal see.

The said Suidbert, being made bishop, returned from Britain, and not long after departed to the Boructuari; and by his preaching brought many of them into the way of truth; but the Boructuari being not long after subdued by the Old Saxons, those who had received the Word were dispersed abroad; and the bishop himself with certain others went to Pippin, who, at the request of his wife, Blithryda, gave him a place of abode in a certain island on the Rhine, called in their tongue, Inlitore; there he built a monastery, which his successors still possess, and for a time dwelt in it, leading a most continent life, and there ended his days.

When they who had gone thither had spent some years teaching in Frisland, Pippin, with the consent of them all, sent the venerable Wilbrord to Rome, where Sergius was still pope, desiring that he might be consecrated archbishop over the nation of the Frisians; which was accordingly done, as he had made request, in the year of our Lord 696. He was consecrated in the church of the Holy Martyr Cecilia, on her festival; and the said pope gave him the name of Clement, and forthwith sent him back to his bishopric, to wit, fourteen days after his arrival in the city.

Pippin gave him a place for his episcopal see, in his famous fort, which in the ancient language of those people is called Wiltaburg, that is, the town of the Wilts; but, in the Gallic tongue, Trajectum. The most reverend prelate having built a church there, and preaching the Word of faith far and near, drew many from their errors, and built many churches and not a few monasteries. For not long after he himself constituted other bishops in those parts from the number of the brethren that either came with him or after him to preach there; of whom some are now fallen asleep in the Lord; but Wilbrord himself, surnamed Clement, is still living, venerable for his great age, having been thirty-six years a bishop, and now, after manifold conflicts of the heavenly warfare, he longs with all his heart for the recompense of the reward in Heaven.

CHAP. 12

His temporibus miraculum memorabile et antiquorum simile in Brittania factum est. Namque ad excitationem uiuentium de morte animae, quidam aliquandiu mortuus ad uitam resurrexit corporis, et multa memoratu digna, quae uiderat, narrauit; e quibus hic aliqua breuiter perstringenda esse putauī. Erat ergo pater familias in regione Nordanhymbrorum, quae uocatur Incuneningum, religiosam cum domu sua gerens uitam; qui infirmitate corporis tactus, et hac crescente per dies, ad extrema perductus, primo tempore noctis defunctus est; sed diluculo reuiuiscens, ac repente residens, omnes, qui corpori flentes adsederant, timore inmenso perculosos in fugam conuertit; uxor tantum, quae amplius amabat, quamuis multum tremens et puida, remansit. Quam ille consolatus: ‘Noli,’ inquit, ‘timere, quia iam uere surrexi a morte, qua tenebar, et apud homines sum iterum uiuere permissus; non tamen ea mihi, qua ante consueam, conuersatione, sed multum dissimili ex hoc tempore uiuendum est.’

Statimque surgens, abiit ad uillulae oratorium, et usque ad diem in oratione persistens, mox omnem, quam possederat, substantiam in tres diuisit portiones, e quibus unam coniugi, alteram filiis tradidit, tertiam sibi ipse retentans, statim pauperibus distribuit. Nec multo post saeculi curis absolutus ad monasterium Mailros, quod Tuidi fluminis circumflexu maxima ex parte clauditur, peruenit; acceptaque tonsura, locum secretae mansionis, quam praeuiderat abbas, intrauit;

et ibi usque ad diem mortis in tanta mentis et corporis contritione durauit, ut multa illum, quae alios laterent, uel horrenda uel desideranda uidisse, etiamsi lingua sileret, uita loqueretur.

Narrabat autem hoc modo, quod uiderat: ‘Lucidus,’ inquit, ‘aspectu et clarus erat indumento, qui me ducebat. Incedebamus autem tacentes, ut uidebatur mihi, contra ortum solis solstitialem; cumque ambulemus, deuenimus ad uallem multae latitudinis ac profunditatis, infinitae autem longitudinis; quae ad leuam nobis sita, unum latus flammis feruentibus nimium terribile, alterum furenti grandine ac frigore niuium omnia perflante atque uerrente non minus intolerabile praeferebat. Utrumque autem erat animabus hominum plenum, quae uicissim huc inde uidebantur quasi tempestatis impetu iactari. Cum enim uim feruoris inmensi tolerare non possent, prosiliebant miserae in medium rigoris infesti; et cum neque ibi quippiam requiei inuenire ualerent, resiliebant rursus urendae in medium flammarum inextinguibilium. Cumque hac infelici uicissitudine longe lateque, prout aspicere poteram, sine ulla quietis intercapedine innumerabilis spirituum deformium multitudo torqueretur, cogitare coepi, quod hic fortasse esset infernus, de cuius tormentis intolerabilibus narrari saepius audiui. Respondit cogitationi meae ductor, qui me praecedebat: “Non hoc,”

inquiens, “suspiceris; non enim hic infernus est ille, quem putas.”

‘At cum me hoc spectaculo tam horrendo perterritum paulatim in ulteriora produceret, uidi subito ante nos obscurari incipere loca, et tenebris omnia repleri. Quas cum intraremus, in tantum paulisper condensatae sunt, ut nihil praeter ipsas aspicerem, excepta dumtaxat specie et ueste eius, qui me ducebat. Et cum progredieremur ‘sola sub nocte per umbras,’ ecce subito apparent ante nos crebri flammaram tetrae globi, ascendentes quasi de puteo magno, rursumque decedentes in eundem. Quo cum perductus essem, repente ductor meus disparuit, ac me solum in medio tenebrarum et horridae uisionis reliquit. At cum idem globi ignium sine intermissione modo alta peterent, modo ima baratri repeterent, cerno omnia, quae ascendebant, fastigia flammaram plena esse spiritibus hominum, qui instar fauillarum cum fumo ascendentium, nunc ad sublimiora proicerentur, nunc retractis ignium uaporibus relaberentur in profunda. Sed et fetor incomparabilis cum eisdem uaporibus ebulliens omnia illa tenebrarum loca replebat. Et cum diutius ibi pauidus consisterem, utpote incertus, quid agerem, quo uerterem gressum, qui me finis maneret; audio subitum post terga sonitum inmanissimi fletus ac miserrimi, simul et cachinnum crepitantem quasi uulgi indocti captis hostibus insultantis. Ut autem sonitus idem clarior redditus ad me usque peruenit, considero turbam malignorum spirituum, quae quinque animas hominum merentes heulantesque, ipsa multum exultans et cachinnans, medias illas trahebat in tenebras; e quibus uidelicet hominibus, ut dinoscere potui, quidam erat adtonsus ut clericus, quidam laicus, quaedam femina. Trahentes autem eos maligni spiritus descenderunt in medium baratri illius ardentis;

factumque est, ut cum longius subeuntibus eis, fletum hominum et risum daemoniorum clare discernere nequirem, sonum tamen adhuc promiscuum in auribus haberem. Interea ascenderunt quidam spirituum obscurorum de abyssu illa flammiuoma, et adcurrentes circumdederunt me, atque oculis flammantibus, et de ore ac naribus ignem putidum efflantes angebant; forcipibus quoque igneis, quos tenebant in manibus, minitabantur me comprehendere, nec tamen me ullatenus contingere, tametsi terrere praesumebant. Qui cum undiqueuersum hostibus et caecitate tenebrarum conclusus, huc illucque oculos circumferrem, si forte alicunde quid auxilii, quo saluarer, adueniret, apparuit retro uia, qua ueneram, quasi fulgor stellae micantis inter tenebras, qui paulatim crescens, et ad me ocus festinans, ubi adpropinquauit, dispersi sunt et aufugerunt omnes, qui me forcipibus rapere quaerebant spiritus infesti.

‘Ille autem, qui adueniens eos fugauit, erat ipse, qui me ante ducebat; qui mox conuersus ad dextrum iter, quasi contra ortum solis brumalem me ducere coepit. Nec mora, exemptum tenebris in auras me serenae lucis eduxit; cumque me in luce aperta duceret, uidi ante nos murum permaximum, cuius neque longitudini hinc uel inde, neque altitudini ullus esse terminus uideretur. Coepi autem mirari, quare ad murum accederemus, cum in eo nullam ianuam, uel

fenestram, uel ascensum alicubi conspicerem. Cum ergo peruenissemus ad murum, statim nescio quo ordine fuimus in summitate eius. Et ecce ibi campus erat latissimus ac laetissimus, tantaque flagrantia uernantium flosculorum plenus, ut omnem mox fetorem tenebrosi fornacis, qui me peruaserat, effugaret admirandi huius suauitas odoris. Tanta autem lux cuncta ea loca perfuderat, ut omni splendore diei siue solis meridiani radiis uideretur esse praeclarior.

Erantque in hoc campo innumera hominum albatorum conuenticula, sedesque plurimae agminum laetantium. Cumque inter choros felicitum incolarum medios me duceret, cogitare coepi, quod hoc fortasse esset regnum caelorum, de quo praedicari saepius audiui. Respondit ille cogitatu meo: “Non,” inquit, “non hoc est regnum caelorum, quod autumas.”

‘Cumque procedentes transissemus et has beatorum mansiones spirituum, aspicio ante nos multo maiorem luminis gratiam quam prius; in qua etiam uocem cantantium dulcissimam audiui; sed et odoris flagrantia miri tanta de loco effundebatur, ut is, quem antea degustans quasi maximum rebar, iam permodicus mihi odor uideretur; sicut etiam lux illa campi florentis eximia, in comparatione eius, quae nunc apparuit, lucis, tenuissima prorsus uidebatur, et parua. In cuius amoenitatem loci cum nos intraturos sperarem, repente ductor substitit; nec mora, gressum retorquens ipsa me, qua uenimus, uia reduxit.

‘Cumque reuersi perueniremus ad mansiones illas laetas spirituum candidatorum, dixit mihi: “Scis, quae sint ista omnia, quae uidisti?” Respondi ego: “Non.” Et ait: “Uallis illa, quam aspexisti flammis feruentibus et frigoribus horrenda rigidis, ipse est locus, in quo examinandae et castigandae sunt animae illorum, qui differentes confiteri et emendare scelera, quae fecerunt, in ipso tandem mortis articulo ad paenitentiam confugiunt, et sic de corpore exeunt; qui tamen, quia confessionem et paenitentiam uel in morte habuerunt, omnes in die iudicii ad regnum caelorum perueniunt.

Multos autem preces uiuentium, et elimosynae, et ieiunia, et maxime celebratio missarum, ut etiam ante diem iudicii liberentur, adiuuant. Porro puteus ille flammium ac putidus, quem uidisti, ipsum est os gehennae, in quo quicumque semel inciderit, numquam inde liberabitur in aeuum. Locus uero iste florifer, in quo pulcherrimam hanc iuuentutem iucundari ac fulgere conspicias, ipse est, in quo recipiuntur animae eorum, qui in bonis quidem operibus de corpore exeunt; non tamen sunt tantae perfectionis, ut in regnum caelorum statim mereantur introduci; qui tamen omnes in die iudicii ad uisionem Christi, et gaudia regni caelestis intrabunt. Nam quicumque in omni uerbo, et opere, et cogitatione perfecti sunt, mox de corpore egressi ad regnum caeleste perueniunt; ad cuius uicina pertinet locus ille, ubi sonum cantilenae dulcis cum odore suauitatis ac splendore lucis audisti. Tu autem, quia nunc ad corpus reuertere, et rursum inter homines uiuere debes, si actus tuos curiosius discutere, et mores sermonesque tuos in rectitudine ac simplicitate seruare studueris, accipies et ipse post mortem locum mansionis inter haec, quae

cernis, agmina laetabunda spirituum beatorum. Namque ego, cum ad tempus abscissem a te, ad hoc feci, ut, quid de te fieri deberet, agnoscerem.” Haec mihi cum dixisset, multum detestatus sum reuerti ad corpus, delectatus nimirum suauitate ac decore loci illius, quem intuebar, simul et consortio eorum, quos in illo uidebam. Nec tamen aliquid ductorem meum rogare audebam; sed inter haec nescio quo ordine repente me inter homines uiuere cerno.’

Haec et alia, quae uiderat, idem uir Domini, non omnibus passim desidiosius ac uitae suae incuriosis referre uolebat, sed illis solummodo, qui uel tormentorum metu perterriti, uel spe gaudiorum perennium delectati, profectum pietatis ex eius uerbis haurire uolebant. Denique in uicinia cellae illius habitabat quidam monachus, nomine Haemgils, presbyteratus etiam, quem bonis actibus adaequabat, gradu praeminens, qui adhuc superest, et in Hibernia insula solitarius ultimam uitae aetatem pane cibario et frigida aqua sustentat. Hic saepius ad eundem uirum ingrediens, audiuit ab eo repetita interrogatione, quae et qualia essent, quae exutus corpore uideret; per cuius relationem ad nostram quoque agnitionem peruenire, quae de his pauca perstrinximus. Narrabat autem uisiones suas etiam regi Aldfrido, uiro undecumque doctissimo; et tam libenter tamque studiose ab illo auditus est, ut eius rogatu monasterio supra memorato inditus, ac monachica sit tonsura coronatus, atque ad eum audiendum saepissime, cum illas in partes deuenisset, accederet. Cui uidelicet monasterio tempore illo religiosae ac modestae uitae abbas et presbyter Ediluald praeerat, qui nunc episcopalem Lindisfarnensis ecclesiae cathedram condignis gradu actibus seruat.

Accepit autem in eodem monasterio locum mansionis secretiorem, ubi liberius continuus in orationibus famulatus sui conditoris uacaret.

Et quia locus ipse super ripam fluminis erat situs, solebat hoc creber ob magnum castigandi corporis affectum ingredi, ac saepius in eo supermeantibus undis inmergi; sicque ibidem quamdiu sustinere posse uidebatur, psalmis uel precibus insistere, fixusque manere, ascendente aqua fluminis usque ad lumbos, aliquando et usque ad collum; atque inde egrediens ad terram, numquam ipsa uestimenta uda atque algida deponere curabat, donec ex suo corpore calefierent et sicarentur. Cumque tempore hiemali defluentibus circa eum semifractarum crustis glacierum, quas et ipse aliquando contriuerat, quo haberet locum standi siue inmergendi in fluuium, dicerent, qui uidebant: ‘Mirum, frater Drythelme,’ (hoc enim erat uiro nomen), ‘quod tantam frigoris asperitatem ulla ratione tolerare praeuales.’ Respondebat ille simpliciter, erat namque homo simplicis ingenii, ac moderatae naturae: ‘Frigidiora ego uidi.’ Et cum dicerent: ‘Mirum, quod tam austeram tenere continentiam uelis.’

Respondebat: ‘Austeriora ego uidi.’ Sicque usque ad diem suae uocationis infatigabili caelestium bonorum desiderio corpus senile inter cotidiana ieiunia domabat, multisque et uerbo et conuersatione saluti fuit.

How one in the province of the Northumbrians, rose from the dead, and related many things which he had seen, some to be greatly dreaded and some to be desired. [Circ. 696 a.d.]

At this time a memorable miracle, and like to those of former days, was wrought in Britain; for, to the end that the living might be roused from the death of the soul, a certain man, who had been some time dead, rose again to the life of the body, and related many memorable things that he had seen; some of which I have thought fit here briefly to describe. There was a certain householder in that district of the Northumbrians which is called Incuneningum, who led a godly life, with all his house. This man fell sick, and his sickness daily increasing, he was brought to extremity, and died in the beginning of the night; but at dawn he came to life again, and suddenly sat up, whereat all those that sat about the body weeping fled away in great terror, only his wife, who loved him better, though trembling and greatly afraid, remained with him. And he comforting her, said, "Fear not, for I am now in very deed risen from death whereof I was holden, and permitted again to live among men; nevertheless, hereafter I must not live as I was wont, but after a very different manner." Then rising immediately, he went to the oratory of the little town, and continuing in prayer till day, forthwith divided all his substance into three parts; one whereof he gave to his wife, another to his children, and the third, which he kept himself, he straightway distributed among the poor. Not long after, being set free from the cares of this world, he came to the monastery of Mailros, which is almost enclosed by the winding of the river Tweed, and having received the tonsure, went apart into a place of abode which the abbot had provided, and there he continued till the day of his death, in so great contrition of mind and mortifying of the body, that even if his tongue had been silent, his life would have declared that he had seen many things either to be dreaded or coveted, which were hidden from other men.

Thus he related what he had seen. "He that led me had a countenance full of light, and shining raiment, and we went in silence, as it seemed to me, towards the rising of the summer sun. And as we walked we came to a broad and deep valley of infinite length; it lay on our left, and one side of it was exceeding terrible with raging flames, the other no less intolerable for violent hail and cold snows drifting and sweeping through all the place. Both sides were full of the souls of men which seemed to be tossed from one side to the other as it were by a violent storm; for when they could no longer endure the fervent heat, the hapless souls leaped into the midst of the deadly cold; and finding no rest there, they leaped back again to be burnt in the midst of the unquenchable flames. Now whereas an innumerable multitude of misshapen spirits were thus tormented far and near with this interchange of misery, as far as I could see, without any interval of rest, I began to think that peradventure

this might be Hell, of whose intolerable torments I had often heard men talk. My guide, who went before me, answered to my thought, saying, 'Think not so, for this is not the Hell you believe it to be.'

'When he had led me farther by degrees, sore dismayed by that dread sight, on a sudden I saw the place before us begin to grow dark and filled with shadows. When we entered into them, the shadows by degrees grew so thick, that I could see nothing else, save only the darkness and the shape and garment of him that led me. As we went on 'through the shades in the lone night,' lo! on a sudden there appeared before us masses of foul flame constantly rising as it were out of a great pit, and falling back again into the same. When I had been led thither, my guide suddenly vanished, and left me alone in the midst of darkness and these fearful sights. As those same masses of fire, without intermission, at one time flew up and at another fell back into the bottom of the abyss, I perceived that the summits of all the flames, as they ascended were full of the spirits of men, which, like sparks flying upwards with the smoke, were sometimes thrown on high, and again, when the vapours of the fire fell, dropped down into the depths below. Moreover, a stench, foul beyond compare, burst forth with the vapours, and filled all those dark places.

'Having stood there a long time in much dread, not knowing what to do, which way to turn, or what end awaited me, on a sudden I heard behind me the sound of a mighty and miserable lamentation, and at the same time noisy laughter, as of a rude multitude insulting captured enemies. When that noise, growing plainer, came up to me, I beheld a crowd of evil spirits dragging five souls of men, wailing and shrieking, into the midst of the darkness, whilst they themselves exulted and laughed. Among those human souls, as I could discern, there was one shorn like a clerk, one a layman, and one a woman. The evil spirits that dragged them went down into the midst of the burning pit; and it came to pass that as they went down deeper, I could no longer distinguish between the lamentation of the men and the laughing of the devils, yet I still had a confused sound in my ears. In the meantime, some of the dark spirits ascended from that flaming abyss, and running forward, beset me on all sides, and with their flaming eyes and the noisome fire which they breathed forth from their mouths and nostrils, tried to choke me; and threatened to lay hold on me with fiery tongs, which they had in their hands, yet they durst in no wise touch me, though they assayed to terrify me. Being thus on all sides encompassed with enemies and shades of darkness, and casting my eyes hither and thither if haply anywhere help might be found whereby I might be saved, there appeared behind me, on the way by which I had come, as it were, the brightness of a star shining amidst the darkness; which waxing greater by degrees, came rapidly towards me: and when it drew near, all those evil spirits, that sought to carry me away with their tongs, dispersed and fled.

'Now he, whose approach put them to flight, was the same that led me before; who, then turning towards the right, began to lead me, as it were,

towards the rising of the winter sun, and having soon brought me out of the darkness, led me forth into an atmosphere of clear light. While he thus led me in open light, I saw a vast wall before us, the length on either side, and the height whereof, seemed to be altogether boundless. I began to wonder why we went up to the wall, seeing no door in it, nor window, nor any way of ascent. But when we came to the wall, we were presently, I know not by what means, on the top of it, and lo! there was a wide and pleasant plain full of such fragrance of blooming flowers that the marvellous sweetness of the scents immediately dispelled the foul stench of the dark furnace which had filled my nostrils. So great was the light shed over all this place that it seemed to exceed the brightness of the day, or the rays of the noontide sun. In this field were innumerable companies of men clothed in white, and many seats of rejoicing multitudes. As he led me through the midst of bands of happy inhabitants, I began to think that this perchance might be the kingdom of Heaven, of which I had often heard tell. He answered to my thought, saying, 'Nay, this is not the kingdom of Heaven, as you think.'

"When we had also passed those mansions of blessed spirits, and gone farther on, I saw before me a much more beautiful light than before, and therein heard sweet sounds of singing, and so wonderful a fragrance was shed abroad from the place, that the other which I had perceived before and thought so great, then seemed to me but a small thing; even as that wondrous brightness of the flowery field, compared with this which I now beheld, appeared mean and feeble. When I began to hope that we should enter that delightful place, my guide, on a sudden stood still; and straightway turning, led me back by the way we came.

"In our return, when we came to those joyous mansions of the white-robed spirits, he said to me, 'Do you know what all these things are which you have seen?' I answered, 'No,' and then he said, 'That valley which you beheld terrible with flaming fire and freezing cold, is the place in which the souls of those are tried and punished, who, delaying to confess and amend their crimes, at length have recourse to repentance at the point of death, and so go forth from the body; but nevertheless because they, even at their death, confessed and repented, they shall all be received into the kingdom of Heaven at the day of judgement; but many are succoured before the day of judgement, by the prayers of the living and their alms and fasting, and more especially by the celebration of Masses. Moreover that foul flaming pit which you saw, is the mouth of Hell, into which whosoever falls shall never be delivered to all eternity. This flowery place, in which you see this fair and youthful company, all bright and joyous, is that into which the souls of those are received who, indeed, when they leave the body have done good works, but who are not so perfect as to deserve to be immediately admitted into the kingdom of Heaven; yet they shall all, at the day of judgement, behold Christ, and enter into the joys of His kingdom; for such as are perfect in every word and deed and

thought, as soon as they quit the body, forthwith enter into the kingdom of Heaven; in the neighbourhood whereof that place is, where you heard the sound of sweet singing amidst the savour of a sweet fragrance and brightness of light. As for you, who must now return to the body, and again live among men, if you will seek diligently to examine your actions, and preserve your manner of living and your words in righteousness and simplicity, you shall, after death, have a place of abode among these joyful troops of blessed souls which you behold. For when I left you for awhile, it was for this purpose, that I might learn what should become of you.' When he had said this to me, I much abhorred returning to the body, being delighted with the sweetness and beauty of the place which I beheld, and with the company of those I saw in it. Nevertheless, I durst not ask my guide anything; but thereupon, on a sudden, I found myself, I know not how, alive among men."

Now these and other things which this man of God had seen, he would not relate to slothful men, and such as lived negligently; but only to those who, being terrified with the dread of torments, or ravished with the hope of everlasting joys, would draw from his words the means to advance in piety. In the neighbourhood of his cell lived one Haemgils, a monk, and eminent in the priesthood, whose good works were worthy of his office: he is still living, and leading a solitary life in Ireland, supporting his declining age with coarse bread and cold water. He often went to that man, and by repeated questioning, heard of him what manner of things he had seen when out of the body; by whose account those few particulars which we have briefly set down came also to our knowledge. And he related his visions to King Aldfrid, a man most learned in all respects, and was by him so willingly and attentively heard, that at his request he was admitted into the monastery above-mentioned, and received the crown of the monastic tonsure; and the said king, whensoever he came into those parts, very often went to hear him. At that time the abbot and priest Ethelwald, a man of godly and sober life, presided over that monastery. He now occupies the episcopal see of the church of Lindisfarne, leading a life worthy of his degree.

He had a place of abode assigned him apart in that monastery, where he might give himself more freely to the service of his Creator in continual prayer. And inasmuch as that place was on the banks of the river, he was wont often to go into the same for the great desire he had to do penance in his body, and oftentimes to plunge in it, and to continue saying psalms or prayers in the same as long as he could endure it, standing still, while the waves flowed over him, sometimes up to the middle, and sometimes even to the neck in water; and when he went ashore, he never took off his cold, wet garments till they grew warm and dry on his body. And when in the winter the cracking pieces of ice were floating about him, which he had himself sometimes broken, to make room to stand or plunge in the river, and those who beheld it would say, "We marvel, brother Drythelm (for so he was called), that you are able to

endure such severe cold;" he answered simply, for he was a simple and sober-spirited man, "I have seen greater cold." And when they said, "We marvel that you choose to observe so hard a rule of continence," he replied, "I have seen harder things." And so, until the day of his calling hence, in his unwearied desire of heavenly bliss, he subdued his aged body with daily fasting, and forwarded the salvation of many by his words and life.

CHAP. 13

At contra fuit quidam in prouincia Merciorum, cuius uisiones ac uerba, non autem et conuersatio, plurimis, sed non sibimet ipsi, profuit. Fuit autem temporibus Coenredi, qui post Aedilredum regnauit, uir in laico habitu atque officio militari positus; sed quantum pro industria exteriori regi placens, tantum pro interna suimet neglegentia displicens. Ammonebat ergo illum sedulo, ut confiteretur, et emendaret, ac relinqueret scelera sua, priusquam subito mortis superuentu tempus omne paenitendi et emendandi perderet. Uerum ille, frequenter licet admonitus, spernebat uerba salutis, seseque tempore sequente paenitentiam acturum esse promittebat. Haec inter tactus infirmitate, decidit in lectum, atque acri coepit dolore torqueri. Ad quem ingressus rex, diligebat enim eum multum, hortabatur, ut uel tunc, antequam moreretur, paenitentiam ageret commissorum. At ille respondit, non se tunc uelle confiteri peccata sua, sed cum ab infirmitate resurgeret; ne exprobrarent sibi sodales, quod timore mortis faceret ea, quae sospes facere noluerat; fortiter quidem, ut sibi uidebatur, locutus, sed miserabiliter, ut post patuit, daemonica fraude seductus.

Cumque morbo ingrauescente, denuo ad eum uisitandum ac docendum rex intraret, clamabat statim miserabili uoce: ‘Quid uis modo? quid huc uenisti? non enim mihi aliquid utilitatis aut salutis potes ultra conferre.’ At ille: ‘Noli,’ inquit, ‘ita loqui, uide ut sanum sapias.’ ‘Non,’ inquit, ‘insanio, sed pessimam mihi scientiam certus prae oculis habeo.’ ‘Et quid,’ inquit, ‘hoc est?’ ‘Paulo ante,’

inquit, ‘intrauerunt domum hanc duo pulcherrimi iuuenes, et resederunt circa me, unus ad caput, et unus ad pedes; protulitque unus libellum perpulchrum, sed uehementer modicum, ac mihi ad legendum dedit; in quo omnia, quae umquam bona feceram, intuens scripta repperi, et haec erant nimium pauca et modica. Receperunt codicem, neque aliquid mihi dicebant. Tum subito superuenit exercitus malignorum et horridorum uultu spirituum, domumque hanc et exterius obsedit, et intus maxima ex parte residens impleuit. Tunc ille, qui et obscuritate tenebrosae faciei, et primatu sedis maior esse uidebatur eorum, proferens codicem horrendae uisionis, et magnitudinis enormis, et ponderis pene inportabilis, iussit uni ex satellitibus suis mihi ad legendum deferre. Quem cum legissem, inueni omnia scelera, non solum quae opere uel uerbo, sed etiam quae tenuissima cogitatione peccaui, manifestissime in eo tetricis esse descripta litteris. Dicebatque ad illos, qui mihi adsederant, uiros albatos et praeclaros: “Quid hic sedetis, scientes certissime, quia noster est iste?” Responderunt: “Uerum dicitis: accipite et in cumulum damnationis uestrae ducite.” Quo dicto statim disparuerunt;

surgentesque duo nequissimi spiritus, habentes in manibus uomeres, percusserunt me, unus in capite et alius in pede: qui uidelicet modo cum

magno tormento inrepunt in interiora corporis mei, moxque ut ad se inuicem perueniunt, moriar, et paratis ad rapiendum me daemonibus in inferni claustra pertrahar.’

Sic loquebatur miser desperans, et non multo post defunctus, paenitentiam, quam ad breue tempus cum fructu ueniae facere supersedit, in aeternum sine fructu poenis subditus facit. De quo constat, quia, sicut beatus papa Gregorius de quibusdam scribit, non pro se ista, cui non profuere, sed pro aliis uiderit, qui eius interitum cognoscentes differre tempus paenitentiae, dum uacat, timerent, ne inproviso mortis articulo praeuerti, inpaenitentes perirent. Quod autem codices diuersos per bonos siue malos spiritus sibi uidit offerri, ob id superna dispensatione factum est, ut meminerimus facta et cogitationes nostras non in uentum diffluere, sed ad examen summi Iudicis cuncta seruari; et siue per amicos angelos in fine nobis ostendenda, siue per hostes. Quod uero prius candidum codicem protulerunt angeli, deinde atrum daemones; illi perparuum, isti enormem; animaduertendum est, quod in prima aetate bona aliqua fecit, quae tamen uniuersa praeue agendo iuuenis obnubilauit. Qui si e contrario errores pueritiae corrigere in adulescentia, ac bene faciendo a Dei oculis abscondere curasset, posset eorum numero sociari, de quibus ait psalmus: ‘Beati, quorum remissae sunt iniquitates, et quorum tecta sunt peccata.’ Hanc historiam, sicut a uenerabili antistite Pecthelmo didici, simpliciter ob salutem legentium siue audientium narrandam esse putauit.

Chap. XIII.

How another contrarywise before his death saw a book containing his sins, which was shown him by devils. [704-709 a.d.]

But contrarywise there was a man in the province of the Mercians, whose visions and words, but not his manner of life, were of profit to others, though not to himself. In the reign of Coenred, who succeeded Ethelred, there was a layman who was a king’s thegn, no less acceptable to the king for his outward industry, than displeasing to him for his neglect of his own soul. The king diligently admonished him to confess and amend, and to forsake his evil ways, lest he should lose all time for repentance and amendment by a sudden death. But though frequently warned, he despised the words of salvation, and promised that he would do penance at some future time. In the meantime, falling sick he betook himself to his bed, and was tormented with grievous pains. The king coming to him (for he loved the man much) exhorted him, even then, before death, to repent of his offences. But he answered that he would not then confess his sins, but would do it when he was recovered of his sickness, lest his companions should upbraid him with having done that for fear of death, which he had refused to do in health. He thought he spoke very bravely, but it afterwards appeared that he had been miserably deceived by the wiles of the Devil.

The disease increasing, when the king came again to visit and instruct him, he cried out straightway with a lamentable voice, "What will you now? What are you come for? for you can no longer do aught for my profit or salvation." The king answered, "Say not so; take heed and be of sound mind." "I am not mad," replied he, "but I now know the worst and have it for certain before my eyes." "What is that?" said the king. "Not long since," said he, "there came into this room two fair youths, and sat down by me, the one at my head, and the other at my feet. One of them drew forth a book most beautiful, but very small, and gave it me to read; looking into it, I there found all the good actions I had ever done in my life written down, and they were very few and inconsiderable. They took back the book and said nothing to me. Then, on a sudden, appeared an army of evil spirits of hideous countenance, and they beset this house without, and sitting down filled the greater part of it within. Then he, who by the blackness of his gloomy face, and his sitting above the rest, seemed to be the chief of them, taking out a book terrible to behold, of a monstrous size, and of almost insupportable weight, commanded one of his followers to bring it to me to read. Having read it, I found therein most plainly written in hideous characters, all the crimes I ever committed, not only in word and deed, but even in the least thought; and he said to those glorious men in white raiment who sat by me, 'Why sit ye here, since ye know of a surety that this man is ours?' They answered, 'Ye speak truly; take him and lead him away to fill up the measure of your damnation.' This said, they forthwith vanished, and two wicked spirits arose, having in their hands ploughshares, and one of them struck me on the head, and the other on the foot. And these ploughshares are now with great torment creeping into the inward parts of my body, and as soon as they meet I shall die, and the devils being ready to snatch me away, I shall be dragged into the dungeons of hell."

Thus spoke that wretch in his despair, and soon after died, and now in vain suffers in eternal torments that penance which he failed to suffer for a short time with the fruits of forgiveness. Of whom it is manifest, that (as the blessed Pope Gregory writes of certain persons) he did not see these things for his own sake, since they did not avail him, but for the sake of others, who, knowing of his end, should be afraid to put off the time of repentance, whilst they have leisure, lest, being prevented by sudden death, they should perish impenitent. And whereas he saw diverse books laid before him by the good and evil spirits, this was done by Divine dispensation, that we may keep in mind that our deeds and thoughts are not scattered to the winds, but are all kept to be examined by the Supreme Judge, and will in the end be shown us either by friendly angels or by the enemy. And whereas the angels first drew forth a white book, and then the devils a black one; the former a very small one, the latter one very great; it is to be observed, that in his first years he did some good actions, all which he nevertheless obscured by the evil actions of his youth. If, contrarywise, he had taken care in his youth to correct the errors of his boyhood, and by well-doing to put them away from the sight of God, he

might have been admitted to the fellowship of those of whom the Psalm says, “Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.” This story, as I learned it of the venerable Bishop Pechthelm, I have thought good to set forth plainly, for the salvation of such as shall read or hear it.

CHAP. 14

Novi autem ipse fratrem, quem utinam non nossem, cuius etiam nomen, si hoc aliquid prodesset, dicere possem; positum in monasterio nobili, sed ipsum ignobiliter uiuentem. Corripiebatur quidem sedulo a fratribus ac maioribus loci, atque ad castigationem uitam conuerti ammonebatur. Et quamuis eos audire noluisset, tolerabatur tamen ab eis longanimitè ob necessitatem operum ipsius exteriorum; erat enim fabrilis arte singularis. Seruiebat autem multum ebrietati, et ceteris uitae remissioris inlecebris; magisque in officina sua die noctuque residere, quam ad psallendum atque orandum in ecclesia, audiendumque cum fratribus uerbum uitae concurrere consuebat. Unde accidit illi, quod solent dicere quidam, quia, qui non uult ecclesiae ianuam sponte humiliatus ingredi, necesse habet in ianuam inferni non sponte damnatus introduci.

Percussus enim langore, atque ad extrema perductus, uocauit fratres, et multum merens ac damnato similis coepit narrare, quia uideret inferos apertos, et Satanam demersum in profundis tartari, Caiphanque cum ceteris, qui occiderunt Dominum, iuxta eum flammis ultricibus contraditum: ‘in quorum uicinia,’ inquit, ‘heu misero mihi locum despicio aeternae perditionis esse praeparatum.’

Audientes haec fratres coeperunt diligenter exhortari, ut uel tunc positus adhuc in corpore, paenitentiam faceret. Respondebat ille desperans: ‘Non est mihi modo tempus uitam mutandi, cum ipse uiderim iudicium meum iam esse completum.’

Talia dicens, sine uiatico salutis obiit, et corpus eius in ultimis est monasterii locis humatum, neque aliquis pro eo uel missas facere, uel psalmos cantare, uel saltem orare praesumebat. O quam grandi distantia diuisit Deus inter lucem et tenebras! Beatus protomartyr Stephanus passurus mortem pro ueritate, uidit caelos apertos, uidit gloriam Dei et Iesum stantem a dextris Dei; et ubi erat futurus ipse post mortem, ibi oculos mentis ante mortem, quo laetior occumberet, misit. At contra, faber iste tenebrosae mentis et actionis, imminente morte, uidit aperta tartara, uidit damnationem diaboli et sequacium eius; uidit etiam suum infelix inter tales carcerem, quo miserabilius ipse desperata salute periret, sed uiuentibus, qui haec cognouissent, causam salutis sua perditione relinqueret. Factum est hoc nuper in prouincia Berniciorum; ac longe lateque diffamatum, multos ad agendam et non differendam scelerum suorum paenitudinem prouocauit. Quod utinam exhinc etiam nostrarum lectione litterarum fiat!

Chap. XIV.

How another in like manner, being at the point of death, saw the place of punishment appointed for him in Hell.

I myself knew a brother, would to God I had not known him, whose name I could mention if it were of any avail, dwelling in a famous monastery, but himself living infamously. He was oftentimes rebuked by the brethren and elders of the place, and admonished to be converted to a more chastened life; and though he would not give ear to them, they bore with him long and patiently, on account of their need of his outward service, for he was a cunning artificer. But he was much given to drunkenness, and other pleasures of a careless life, and more used to stop in his workshop day and night, than to go to church to sing and pray and hear the Word of life with the brethren. For which reason it befell him according to the saying, that he who will not willingly humble himself and enter the gate of the church must needs be led against his will into the gate of Hell, being damned. For he falling sick, and being brought to extremity, called the brethren, and with much lamentation, like one damned, began to tell them, that he saw Hell opened, and Satan sunk in the depths thereof; and Caiaphas, with the others that slew our Lord, hard by him, delivered up to avenging flames. "In whose neighbourhood," said he, "I see a place of eternal perdition prepared for me, miserable wretch that I am." The brothers, hearing these words, began diligently to exhort him, that he should repent even then, whilst he was still in the flesh. He answered in despair, "There is no time for me now to change my course of life, when I have myself seen my judgement passed."

Whilst uttering these words, he died without having received the saving Viaticum, and his body was buried in the farthest parts of the monastery, nor did any one dare either to say Masses or sing psalms, or even to pray for him. Oh how far asunder hath God put light from darkness! The blessed Stephen, the first martyr, being about to suffer death for the truth, saw the heavens opened, and the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God; and where he was to be after death, there he fixed the eyes of his mind, that he might die the more joyfully. But this workman, of darkened mind and life, when death was at hand, saw Hell opened, and witnessed the damnation of the Devil and his followers; he saw also, unhappy wretch! his own prison among them, to the end that, despairing of salvation, he might himself die the more miserably, but might by his perdition afford cause of salvation to the living who should hear of it. This befell of late in the province of the Bernicians, and being noised abroad far and near, inclined many to do penance for their sins without delay. Would to God that this also might come to pass through the reading of our words!

CHAP. 15

Quo tempore plurima pars Scottorum in Hibernia, et nonnulla etiam de Brettonibus in Brittaniam, rationabile et ecclesiasticum paschalis obseruantiae tempus Domino donante suscepit. Siquidem Adamnan, presbyter et abbas monachorum, qui erant in insula Hii, cum legationis gratia missus a sua gente, uenisset ad Aldfridum, regem Anglorum, et aliquandiu in ea prouincia moratus uideret ritus ecclesiae canonicos; sed et a pluribus, qui erant eruditiores, esset solerter admonitus, ne contra uniuersalem ecclesiae morem uel in obseruantia paschali, uel in aliis quibusque decretis cum suis paucissimis et in extremo mundi angulo positus uiuere praesumeret, mutatus mente est; ita ut ea, quae uiderat et audierat in ecclesiis Anglorum, suae suorumque consuetudini libentissime praeferret. Erat enim uir bonus, et sapiens, et scientia scripturarum nobilissime instructus.

Qui cum domum redisset, curauit suos, qui erant in Hii, quiue eidem erant subditi monasterio, ad eum, quem cognouerat, quemque ipse toto ex corde susceperat, ueritatis callem perducere, nec ualuit.

Nauigauit Hiberniam, et praedicans eis, ac modesta exhortatione declarans legitimum paschae tempus, plurimos eorum, et pene omnes, qui ab Hiensium dominio erant liberi, ab errore auito correctos, ad unitatem reduxit catholicam, ac legitimum paschae tempus obseruare perdocuit. Qui cum celebrato in Hibernia canonico pascha, ad suam insulam reuertisset, suoque monasterio catholicam temporis paschalis obseruantiam instantissime praedicaret, nec tamen perficere, quod conabatur, posset, contigit eum ante expletum anni circulum migrasse de saeculo. Diuina utique gratia disponente, ut uir unitatis ac pacis studiosissimus ante ad uitam raperetur aeternam, quam redeunte tempore paschali, grauiorem cum eis, qui eum ad ueritatem sequi nolebant, cogeretur habere discordiam.

Scriptis idem uir de locis sanctis librum legentibus multis utillimum; cuius auctor erat docendo ac dictando Galliarum episcopus Arcuulfus, qui locorum gratia sanctorum uenerat Hierosolymam, et lustrata omni terra repromissionis, Damascus quoque, Constantinopolim, Alexandriam, multas maris insulas adierat;

patriamque nauigio reuertens, ui tempestatis in occidentalia Brittaniae litora delatus est; ac post multa ad memoratum Christi famulum Adamnanum perueniens, ubi doctus in scripturis, sanctorumque locorum gnarus esse conpertus est, libentissime est ab illo susceptus, libentius auditus; adeo ut, quaeque ille se in locis sanctis memoratu digna uidisse testabatur, cuncta mox iste litteris mandare curauerit. Fecitque opus, ut dixi, multis utile, et maxime illis, qui longius ab eis locis, in quibus patriarchae uel apostoli erant, secreti, ea tantum de his, quae lectione didicerint, norunt.

Porrexit autem librum hunc Adamnan Aldfrido regi, ac per eius est largitionem etiam minoribus ad legendum contraditus. Scriptor quoque ipse multis ab ea muneribus donatus patriam remissus est. De cuius scriptis aliqua decerpere, ac nostrae huic historiae inserere commodum fore legentibus reor.

Chap. XV.

How divers churches of the Scots, at the instance of Adamnan, adopted the Catholic Easter; and how the same wrote a book about the holy places. [703 a.d.]

At this time a great part of the Scots in Ireland, and some also of the Britons in Britain, by the grace of God, adopted the reasonable and ecclesiastical time of keeping Easter. For when Adamnan, priest and abbot of the monks that were in the island of Hii, was sent by his nation on a mission to Aldfrid, king of the English, he abode some time in that province, and saw the canonical rites of the Church. Moreover, he was earnestly admonished by many of the more learned sort, not to presume to live contrary to the universal custom of the Church, either in regard to the observance of Easter, or any other ordinances whatsoever, with those few followers of his dwelling in the farthest corner of the world. Wherefore he so changed his mind, that he readily preferred those things which he had seen and heard in the English churches, to the customs which he and his people had hitherto followed. For he was a good and wise man, and excellently instructed in knowledge of the Scriptures. Returning home, he endeavoured to bring his own people that were in Hii, or that were subject to that monastery, into the way of truth, which he had embraced with all his heart; but he could not prevail. He sailed over into Ireland, and preaching to those people, and with sober words of exhortation making known to them the lawful time of Easter, he brought back many of them, and almost all that were free from the dominion of those of Hii, from the error of their fathers to the Catholic unity, and taught them to keep the lawful time of Easter.

Returning to his island, after having celebrated the canonical Easter in Ireland, he was instant in preaching the Catholic observance of the season of Easter in his monastery, yet without being able to achieve his end; and it so happened that he departed this life before the next year came round, the Divine goodness so ordaining it, that as he was a great lover of peace and unity, he should be taken away to everlasting life before he should be obliged, on the return of the season of Easter, to be at greater variance with those that would not follow him into the truth.

This same man wrote a book concerning the holy places, of great profit to many readers; his authority was the teaching and dictation of Arculf, a bishop of Gaul, who had gone to Jerusalem for the sake of the holy places; and having wandered over all the Promised Land, travelled also to Damascus,

Constantinople, Alexandria, and many islands in the sea, and returning home by ship, was cast upon the western coast of Britain by a great tempest. After many adventures he came to the aforesaid servant of Christ, Adamnan, and being found to be learned in the Scriptures, and acquainted with the holy places, was most gladly received by him and gladly heard, insomuch that whatsoever he said that he had seen worthy of remembrance in the holy places, Adamnan straightway set himself to commit to writing. Thus he composed a work, as I have said, profitable to many, and chiefly to those who, being far removed from those places where the patriarchs and Apostles lived, know no more of them than what they have learnt by reading. Adamnan presented this book to King Aldfrid, and through his bounty it came to be read by lesser persons. The writer thereof was also rewarded by him with many gifts and sent back into his country. I believe it will be of advantage to our readers if we collect some passages from his writings, and insert them in this our History.

CHAP. 16

Scrisit ergo de loco dominicae natiuitatis in hunc modum:

— Bethleem ciuitas Daud in dorso sita est angusto ex omni parte uallibus circumdato, ab occidente in orientem mille passibus longa, humili sine turribus muro per extrema plani uerticis instructo; in cuius orientali angulo quasi quoddam naturale semiantrum est, cuius exterior pars natiuitatis dominicae fuisse dicitur locus; interior Praesepe Domini nominatur. Haec spelunca tota interius pretioso marmore tecta supra locum, ubi Dominus natus specialius traditur, sanctas Mariae grandem gestat ecclesiam.

Scripsit item hoc modo de loco passionis ac resurrectionis illius:

— ‘Ingressis a septentrionali parte urbem Hierosolymam, primum de locis sanctis pro condicione platearum diuertendum est ad ecclesiam Constantinianam, quae Martyrium appellatur. Hanc Constantinus imperator, eo quod ibi crux Domini ab Helena matre reperta sit, magnifico et regio cultu construxit. Dehinc ab occasu Golgothana uidetur ecclesia, in qua etiam rupis apparet illa, quae quondam ipsam adfixo Domini corpore crucem pertulit, argenteam modo pergrandem sustinens crucem, pendente magna desuper aerea rota cum lampadibus. Infra ipsum uero locum dominicae crucis, excisa in petra crypta est, in qua super altare pro defunctis honoratis sacrificium solet offerri, positis interim in platea corporibus. Huius quoque ad occasum ecclesiae, Anastasis, hoc est resurrectionis dominicae rotunda ecclesia, tribus cincta parietibus, XII columnis sustentatur, inter parietes singulos latum habens spatium uiae, quae tria altaria in tribus locis parietis medii continet, hoc est australi, aquilonali, et occidentali. Haec bis quaternas portas, id est introitus, per tres e regione parietes habet, e quibus III ad Uulturnum, et III ad Eurum spectant. Huius in medio monumentum Domini rotundum petra excisum est, cuius culmen intrinsecus stans homo manu contingere potest, ab oriente habens introitum, cui lapis ille magnus adpositus est; quod intrinsecus ferramentorum uestigia usque in praesens ostendit. Nam extrinsecus usque ad culminis summitatem totum marmore tectum est. Summum uero culmen auro ornatum auream magnam gestat crucem. In huius ergo monumenti Aquilonali parte sepulchrum Domini in eadem petra excisum, longitudinis VII pedum, trium mensura palmarum pauimento altius eminet; introitum habens a latere meridiano, ubi die noctuque XII lampades ardent, III intra sepulchrum, VIII supra in margine dextro. Lapis, qui ad ostium monumenti positus erat, nunc fissus est; cuius pars minor quadratum altare ante ostium nihilominus eiusdem monumenti stat;

maior uero in orientali eiusdem ecclesiae loco quadrangulum aliud altare sub linteaminibus exstat. Color autem eiusdem monumenti et sepulchri albo et rubicundo permixtus uidetur.

**The account given in the aforesaid book of the place of our Lord's
Nativity, Passion, and Resurrection.**

He wrote concerning the place of the Nativity of our Lord, after this manner: "Bethlehem, the city of David, is situated on a narrow ridge, encompassed on all sides with valleys, being a mile in length from west to east, and having a low wall without towers, built along the edge of the level summit. In the eastern corner thereof is a sort of natural half cave, the outward part whereof is said to have been the place where our Lord was born; the inner is called the manger of our Lord. This cave within is all covered with rich marble, and over the particular spot where our Lord is said to have been born, stands the great church of St. Mary." He likewise wrote about the place of His Passion and Resurrection in this manner: "Entering the city of Jerusalem on the north side, the first place to be visited, according to the disposition of the streets, is the church of Constantine, called the Martyrium. It was built by the Emperor Constantine, in a royal and magnificent manner, because the Cross of our Lord was said to have been found there by his mother Helena. Thence, to the westward, is seen the church of Golgotha, in which is also to be found the rock which once bore the Cross to which the Lord's body was nailed, and now it upholds a large silver cross, having a great brazen wheel with lamps hanging over it. Under the place of our Lord's Cross, a crypt is hewn out of the rock, in which the Sacrifice is offered on an altar for the dead that are held in honour, their bodies remaining meanwhile in the street. To the westward of this church is the round church of the Anastasis or Resurrection of our Lord, encompassed with three walls, and supported by twelve columns. Between each of the walls is a broad passage, which contains three altars at three different points of the middle wall; to the south, the north, and the west. It has eight doors or entrances in a straight line through the three walls; four whereof face the south-east, and four the east. In the midst of it is the round tomb of our Lord cut out of the rock, the top of of which a man standing within can touch with his hand; on the east is the entrance, against which that great stone was set. To this day the tomb bears the marks of the iron tools within, but on the outside it is all covered with marble to the very top of the roof, which is adorned with gold, and bears a large golden cross. In the north part of the tomb the sepulchre of our Lord is hewn out of the same rock, seven feet in length, and three hand-breadths above the floor; the entrance being on the south side, where twelve lamps burn day and night, four within the sepulchre, and eight above on the edge of the right side. The stone that was set at the entrance to the tomb is now cleft in two; nevertheless, the lesser part of it stands as an altar of hewn stone before the door of the tomb; the greater part is set up as another altar, four-cornered, at the east end of the same church, and is covered with linen cloths. The colour of the said tomb and sepulchre is white and red mingled together."

CHAP. 17

De loco quoque ascensionis dominicae praefatus auctor hoc modo refert: — Mons Oliuarum altitudine monti Sion par est, sed latitudine et longitudine praestat; exceptis uitibus et oliuis, rarae ferax arboris, frumenti quoque et hordei fertilis. Neque enim brucosa, sed herbosa et florida soli illius est qualitas; in cuius summo uertice, ubi Dominus ad caelos ascendit, ecclesia rotunda grandis, ternas per circuitum cameratas habet porticus desuper tectas. Interior namque domus propter dominici corporis meatum camerari et tegi non potuit;

altare ad orientem habens angusto culmine protectum, in cuius medio ultima Domini uestigia, caelo desuper patente, ubi ascendit, uisuntur. Quae cum cotidie a credentibus terra tollatur, nihilominus manet, eandemque adhuc speciem ueluti inpressis signata uestigiis seruat. Haec circa aerea rota iacet, usque ad ceruicem alta, ab occasu habens introitum, pendente desuper in trocleis magna lampade, totaque die et nocte lucente. In occidentali eiusdem ecclesiae parte fenestrae octo, totidemque e regione lampades in funibus pendentes usque Hierosolymam per uitrum fulgent; quarum lux corda intuentium cum quadam alacritate et conpunctione pauefacere dicitur. In die ascensionis dominicas per annos singulos, missa peracta, ualidi flaminis procella desursum uenire consuevit, et omnes, qui in ecclesia adfuerint, terrae prosternere.

De situ etiam Chebron et monumentis patrum ita scribit: — Chebron quondam ciuitas et metropolis regni Dauid, nunc ruinis tantum, quid tunc fuerit, ostendens. Uno ad orientem stadio speluncam duplicem in ualle habet, ubi sepulchra patriarcharum quadrato muro circumdantur, capitibus uersis ad Aquilonem; et haec singula singulis tecta lapidibus instar basilicae dolatis; trium patriarcharum candidis, Adam obscurioris et uilioris operis, qui haud longe ab illis ad borealem extremamque muri illius partem pausat. Trium quoque feminarum uiliores et minores memoriae cernuntur. Mamre collis mille passibus a monumentis his ad Boream, herbosus ualde et floridus, campestem habens in uertice planitiem; in cuius aquilonali parte quercus Abrahae duorum hominum altitudinis truncus ecclesia circumdata est.

Haec de opusculis excerpta praefati scriptoris ad sensum quidem uerborum illius, sed breuioribus strictisque comprehensa sermonibus, nostris ad utilitatem legentium historiis indere placuit. Plura uoluminis illius, siqui scire delectat, uel in ipso illo uolumine, uel in eo, quod de illo dudum strictim excerptissimus, epitomate requirat.

Chap. XVII.

What he likewise wrote of the place of our Lord's Ascension, and the tombs of the patriarchs.

Concerning the place of our Lord's Ascension, the aforesaid author writes thus. "The Mount of Olives is equal in height to Mount Sion, but exceeds it in breadth and length; it bears few trees besides vines and olives, and is fruitful in wheat and barley, for the nature of that soil is not such as to yield thickets, but grass and flowers. On the very top of it, where our Lord ascended into heaven, is a large round church, having round about it three chapels with vaulted roofs. For the inner building could not be vaulted and roofed, by reason of the passage of our Lord's Body; but it has an altar on the east side, sheltered by a narrow roof. In the midst of it are to be seen the last Footprints of our Lord, the place where He ascended being open to the sky; and though the earth is daily carried away by believers, yet still it remains, and retains the same appearance, being marked by the impression of the Feet. Round about these lies a brazen wheel, as high as a man's neck, having an entrance from the west, with a great lamp hanging above it on a pulley and burning night and day. In the western part of the same church are eight windows; and as many lamps, hanging opposite to them by cords, shine through the glass as far as Jerusalem; and the light thereof is said to thrill the hearts of the beholders with a certain zeal and compunction. Every year, on the day of the Ascension of our Lord, when Mass is ended, a strong blast of wind is wont to come down, and to cast to the ground all that are in the church."

Of the situation of Hebron, and the tombs of the fathers, he writes thus. "Hebron, once a habitation and the chief city of David's kingdom, now only showing by its ruins what it then was, has, one furlong to the east of it, a double cave in the valley, where the sepulchres of the patriarchs are encompassed with a wall four-square, their heads lying to the north. Each of the tombs is covered with a single stone, hewn like the stones of a church, and of a white colour, for the three patriarchs. Adam's is of meaner and poorer workmanship, and he lies not far from them at the farthest end of the northern part of that wall. There are also some poorer and smaller monuments of the three women. The hill Mamre is a mile from these tombs, and is covered with grass and flowers, having a level plain on the top. In the northern part of it, the trunk of Abraham's oak, being twice as high as a man, is enclosed in a church."

Thus much, gathered from the works of the aforesaid writer, according to the sense of his words, but more briefly and in fewer words, we have thought fit to insert in our History for the profit of readers. Whosoever desires to know more of the contents of that book, may seek it either in the book itself, or in that abridgement which we have lately made from it.

CHAP. 18

Anno dominicae incarnationis DCCV Aldfrid, rex Nordanhymbrorum, defunctus est, anno regni sui XXo necdum inpleto;

cui succedens in imperium filius suus Osred, puer octo circiter annorum, regnavit annis XI. Huius regni principio antistes Occidentalium Saxonum Haeddi caelestem migravit ad uitam. Bonus quippe erat uir, ac iustus, et episcopalem uitam siue doctrinam magis insito sibi uirtutum amore quam lectionibus institutus exercebat. Denique reuerentissimus antistes Pecthelm, de quo in sequentibus suo loco dicendum est, qui cum successore eius Aldhelmo multo tempore adhuc diaconus siue monachus fuit, referre est solitus, quod in loco, quo defunctus est, ob meritum sanctitatis eius multa sanitarum sint patrata miracula, hominesque prouinciae illius solitos ablatum inde puluerem propter languentes in aquam mittere, atque huius gustum siue aspersionem multis sanitatem egrotis et hominibus et pecoribus conferre; propter quod frequenti ablatione pulueris sacri fossa sit ibidem facta non minima.

Quo defuncto, episcopatus prouinciae illius in duas parrochias diuisus est. Una data Daniheli, quam usque hodie regit; altera Aldhelmo, cui annis IIII strenuissime praefuit; ambo et in rebus ecclesiasticis, et in scientia scripturarum sufficienter instructi.

Denique Aldhelm, cum adhuc esset presbyter et abbas monasterii, quod 'Maildufi urbem' nuncupant, scripsit, iubente synodo suae gentis, librum egregium aduersus errorem Bretonum, quo uel pascha non suo tempore celebrant, uel alia perplura ecclesiasticae castitati et paci contraria gerunt, multosque eorum, qui Occidentalibus Saxonibus subditi erant Bretones, ad catholicam dominici paschae celebrationem huius lectione perduxit. Scripsit et de uirginitate librum eximium, quem in exemplum Sedulii geminato opere, et uersibus exametris, et prosa composuit. Scripsit et alia nonnulla, utpote uir undecumque doctissimus; nam et sermone nitidus, et scripturarum, ut dixi, tam liberalium quam ecclesiasticarum erat eruditione mirandus. Quo defuncto, pontificatum pro eo suscepit Fortheri, qui usque hodie superest; uir et ipse in scripturis sanctis multum eruditus.

Quibus episcopatum administrantibus statutum est synodali decreto, ut prouincia Australium Saxonum, quae eatenus ad ciuitatis Uentanae, cui tunc Danihel praeerat, parrochiam pertinebat, et ipsa sedem episcopalem, ac proprium haberet episcopum; consecratusque est eis primus antistes Eadberct, qui erat abbas monasterii beatae memoriae Uilfridi episcopi, quod dicitur Selaseu; quo defuncto, Eolla suscepit officium pontificatus. Ipso autem ante aliquot annos ex hac luce subtracto, episcopatus usque hodie cessauit.

**How the South Saxons received Eadbert and Eolla, and the West Saxons,
Daniel and Aldhelm, for their bishops; and of the writings of the same
Aldhelm. [705 a.d.]**

In the year of our Lord 705, Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, died before the end of the twentieth year of his reign. His son Osred, a boy about eight years of age, succeeding him in the throne, reigned eleven years. In the beginning of his reign, Haedde, bishop of the West Saxons, departed to the heavenly life; for he was a good man and a just, and his life and doctrine as a bishop were guided rather by his innate love of virtue, than by what he had gained from books. The most reverend bishop, Pechthelm, of whom we shall speak hereafter in the proper place, and who while still deacon or monk was for a long time with his successor Aldhelm, was wont to relate that many miracles of healing have been wrought in the place where he died, through the merit of his sanctity; and that the men of that province used to carry the dust thence for the sick, and put it into water, and the drinking thereof, or sprinkling with it, brought health to many sick men and beasts; so that the holy dust being frequently carried away, a great hole was made there.

Upon his death, the bishopric of that province was divided into two dioceses. One of them was given to Daniel, which he governs to this day; the other to Aldhelm, wherein he presided most vigorously four years; both of them were fully instructed, as well in matters touching the Church as in the knowledge of the Scriptures. Aldhelm, when he was as yet only a priest and abbot of the monastery which is called the city of Maildufus, by order of a synod of his own nation, wrote a notable book against the error of the Britons, in not celebrating Easter at the due time, and in doing divers other things contrary to the purity of doctrine and the peace of the church; and through the reading of this book many of the Britons, who were subject to the West Saxons, were led by him to adopt the Catholic celebration of our Lord's Paschal Feast. He likewise wrote a famous book on Virginity, which, after the example of Sedulius, he composed in twofold form, in hexameters and in prose. He wrote some other books, being a man most instructed in all respects, for he had a polished style, and was, as I have said, of marvellous learning both in liberal and ecclesiastical studies. On his death, Forthere was made bishop in his stead, and is living at this time, being likewise a man very learned in the Holy Scriptures.

Whilst they administered the bishopric, it was determined by a synodal decree, that the province of the South Saxons, which till that time belonged to the diocese of the city of Winchester, where Daniel then presided, should itself have an episcopal see, and a bishop of its own. Eadbert, at that time abbot of the monastery of Bishop Wilfrid, of blessed memory, called Selaeseu, was consecrated their first bishop. On his death, Eolla succeeded to the office of bishop. He also died some years ago, and the bishopric has been vacant to this day.

CHAP. 19

Anno autem imperii Osredi IIIo, Coinred, qui regno Merciorum nobilissime tempore aliquanto praefuerat, nobilius multo regni scepra reliquit. Nam uenit Romam, ibique adtonsus, pontificatum habente Constantino, ac monachusfactus, ad limina apostolorum, in precibus, ieiuniis, et elemosynis usque ad diem permansit ultimum;

succedente in regnum Ceolredo filio Aedilredi, qui ante ipsum Coinredum idem regnum tenebat. Uenit autem cum illo et filius Sigheri regis Orientalium Saxonum, cuius supra meminimus, uocabulo Offa, iuuenis amantissimae aetatis et uenustatis, totaeque suae genti ad tenenda seruandaque regni scepra exoptatissimus. Qui pari ductus deuotione mentis, reliquit uxorem, agros, cognatos, et patriam propter Christum, et propter euangelium, ut in hac uita centuplum acciperet, et in saeculo uenturo uitam aeternam. Et ipse ergo, ubi ad loca sancta Romam peruenerunt, adtonsus, et in monachico uitam habitu complens, ad uisionem beatorum apostolorum in caelis diu desideratam peruenit.

Eodem sane anno, quo hi Britanniam reliquere, antistes eximius Uilfrid post XL et V annos accepti episcopatus diem clausit extremum in prouincia, quae uocatur Inundalum; corpusque eius loculo inditum, perlatum est in monasterium ipsius, quod dicitur Inhrypum, et iuxta honorem tanto pontifici congruum in ecclesia beati apostoli Petri sepultum. De cuius statu uitae, ut ad priora repedantes, paucis, quae sunt gesta, memoremus, cum esset puer bonae indolis, atque aetatem moribus transiens, ita se modeste et circumspecte in omnibus gereret, ut merito a maioribus quasi unus ex ipsis amaretur, ueneretur, amplecteretur, ubi XIIIum aetatis contigit annum, monasticam saeculari uitam praetulit. Quod ubi patrisuo narrauit, iam enim mater obierat, libenter eius uotis ac desideriis caelestibus adnuit, eumque coeptis insistere salutaribus iussit.

Uenit ergo ad insulam Lindisfarnensem, ibique monachorum famulatui se contradens, diligenter ea, quae monasticae castitatis ac pietatis erant, et discere curabat et agere. Et quia acris erat ingenii, didicit citissime psalmos, et aliquot codices; necdum quidem adtonsus, uerum eis, quae tonsura maiores sunt, uirtutibus, humilitatis et oboedientiae, non mediocriter insignitus; propter quod et a senioribus et coetaneis suis iusto colebatur affectu. In quo uidelicet monasterio cum aliquot annos Deo seruiret, animaduertit paulatim adulescens animi sagacis, minime perfectam esse uirtutis uiam, quae tradebatur a Scottis, proposuitque animo uenire Romam, et qui ad sedem apostolicam ritus ecclesiastici siue monasteriales seruarentur, uidere. Quod cum fratribus referret, laudauerunt eius propositum, eumque id, quod mente disposuerat, perficere suadebant. At ille confestim ueniens ad reginam Eanfledam, quia notus erat ei, eiusque consilio ac suffragiis praefato fuerat

monasterio sociatus, indicauit ei desiderium sibi inesse beatorum apostolorum limina uisitandi; quae delectata bono adulescentis proposito, misit eum Cantiam ad regem Erconbertum, qui erat filius auunculi sui, postulans, ut eum honorifice Romam transmitteret. Quo tempore ibi gradum archiepiscopatus Honorius, unus ex discipulis beati papae Gregorii, uir in rebus ecclesiasticis sublimiter institutus seruabat. Ubi cum aliquandiu demoratus adulescens animi uiuacis diligenter his, quae inspieiebat, discendis operam daret, superuenit illo alius adulescens, nomine Biscop, cognomento Benedictus, de nobilibus Anglorum, cupiens et ipse Romam uenire;

cuius supra meminimus.

Huius ergo comitatus rex sociauit Uilfridum, utque illum secum Romam perduceret, iussit. Qui cum Lugdunum peruenissent, Uilfrid a Dalfino ciuitatis episcopo ibi retentus est, Benedictus coeptum iter nauiter Romam usque compleuit. Delectabatur enim antistes prudentia uerborum iuuenis, gratia uenusti uultus, alacritate actionis, et constantia ac maturitate cogitationis. Unde et omnia, quae necesse habebat, habundanter ipsi cum sociis suis, quamdiu secum erant, donabat; et insuper offerebat, ut, si uellet, partem Galliarum non minimam illi regendam committeret, ac filiam fratris sui uirginem illi coniugem daret, eumque ipse loco adoptiui semper haberet. At ille gratias agens pietati, quam erga eum, cum esset peregrinus, habere dignaretur, respondit propositum se magis alterius conuersationis habere, atque ideo, patria relictâ, Romam iter agere coepisse.

Quibus auditis antistes misit eum Romam, dato duce itineris, et cunctis simul, quae necessitas poscebat itineris, largiter subministratis; obsecrans sedulo, ut, cum patriam reuerteretur, per se iter facere meminisset. Ueniens uero Romam, et orationibus ac meditationi rerum ecclesiasticarum, ut animo proposuerat, cotidiana mancipatus instantia, peruenit ad amicitiam uiri sanctissimi ac doctissimi, Bonifatii uidelicet archidiaconi, qui etiam consiliarius erat apostolici papae; cuius magisterio III euangeliorum libros ex ordine didicit, computum paschae rationabilem, et alia multa, quae in patria nequiuera, ecclesiasticis disciplinis accommodata, eodem magistro tradente percepit; et cum menses aliquot ibi studiis occupatus felicibus exegisset, rediit ad Dalfinum in Galliam, et III annos apud eum commoratus, adtonsus est ab eo, et in tanto habitus amore, ut heredem sibi illum facere cogitasset. Sed ne hoc fieri posset, antistes crudeli morte praereptus est, et Uilfrid ad suae potius, hoc est Anglorum, gentis episcopatum reseruatus. Namque Baldhild regina missis militibus episcopum iussit interfici; quem ad locum quidem, quo decollandus erat, secutus est Uilfrid clericus illius, desiderans cum eo, tametsi ipso multum prohibente, pariter occumbere. Sed hunc ubi peregrinum atque oriundum de natione Anglorum cognouere carnifices, pepercere illi, neque eum trucidare cum suo uoluerunt pontifice.

At ille Britanniam ueniens, coniunctus est amicitia Alchfridi regis, qui catholicas ecclesiae regulas sequi semper, et amare didicerat. Unde et ille,

quia catholicum eum esse conperiit, mox donauit terram X familiarum in loco, qui dicitur Stanford, et non multo post monasterium XXX familiarum in loco, qui uocatur Inhrypum;

quem uidelicet locum dederat pridem ad construendum inibi monasterium his, qui Scottos sequebantur. Uerum quia illi postmodum optione data maluerunt loco cedere, quam pascha catholicum, ceterosque ritus canonicos iuxta Romanae et apostolicae ecclesiae consuetudinem recipere, dedit hoc illi, quem melioribus inbutum disciplinis ac moribus uidit.

Quo in tempore, ad iussionem praefati regis presbyter ordinatus est in eodem monasterio ab Agilbercto episcopo Geuissorum, cuius supra meminimus, desiderante rege, ut uir tantae eruditionis ac religionis sibi specialiter indiuiduo comitatu sacerdos esset, ac doctor. Quem non multo post, detecta et eliminata, ut et supra docuimus, Scottorum secta, Galliam mittens, cum consilio atque consensu patris sui Osiui, episcopum sibi rogauit ordinari, cum esset annorum circiter XXX, eodem Agilbercto tunc episcopatum agente Parisiaca ciuitatis; cum quo et alii XI episcopi ad dedicationem antistitis conuenientes, multum honorifice ministerium impleuerunt. Quo adhuc in transmarinis partibus demorante, consecratus est in episcopatum Eboraci, iubente rege Osiuo, Ceadda uir sanctus, ut supra memoratum est, et tribus annis ecclesiam sublimiter regens, dehinc ad monasterii sui, quod est in Lastingai, curam secessit, accipiente Uilfrido episcopatum totius Nordanhymbrorum prouinciae.

Qui deinde regnante Ecgrido, pulsus est episcopatu, et alii pro illo consecrati antistites, quorum supra meminimus; Romamque iturus, et coram apostolico papa causam dicturus, ubi nauem conscendit, flante Fauonio pulsus est Fresiam, et honorifice susceptus a barbaris ac rege illorum Aldgilso, praedicabat eis Christum, et multa eorum milia uerbo ueritatis instituens, a peccatorum suorum sordibus fonte Saluatoris abluit; et quod postmodum Uilbrord, reuerentissimus Christi pontifex, in magna deuotione conpleuit, ipse primus ibi opus euangelicum coepit. Ibi ergo hiemem cum noua Dei plebe feliciter exigens, sic Romam ueniendi iter repetiit; et ubi causa eius uentilata est, praesente Agathone papa et pluribus episcopis, uniuersorum iudicio absque crimine accusatus fuisse, et episcopatu esse dignus inuentus est.

Quo in tempore idem papa Agatho, cum synodum congregaret Romae CXXV episcoporum, aduersus eos, qui unam in Domino Saluatore uoluntatem atque operationem dogmatizabant, uocari iussit et Uilfridum, atque inter episcopos consistentem dicere fidem suam, simul et prouinciae siue insulae, de qua uenerat. Cumque catholicus fide cum suis esset inuentus, placuit hoc inter cetera eiusdem synodi gestis inseri, scriptumque est hoc modo: 'Uilfridus Deo amabilis episcopus Eboracae ciuitatis, apostolicam sedem de sua causa appellans, et ab hac potestate de certis incertisque rebus absolutus, et cum aliis CXXV coepiscopis in synodo in iudicii sede constitutus, et pro omni aquilonali parte Brittaniae et Hiberniae, insulis [que] quae ab Anglorum, et

Brettonum, nec non Scottorum et Pictorum gentibus incoluntur, ueram et catholicam fidem confessus est, et cum subscriptione sua corroborauit.'

Post haec reuersus Britanniam prouinciam Australium Saxonum ab idolatriae ritibus ad Christi fidem conuertit. Uectae quoque insulae uerbi ministros destinauit; et secundo anno Aldfridi, qui post Ecgfridum regnauit, sedem suam et episcopatum ipso rege inuitante recepit. Sed post V annos denuo accusatus, ab eodem ipso rege et plurimis episcopis praesulatu pulsus est; ueniensque Romam, cum praesentibus accusatoribus acciperet locum se defendendi, considentibus episcopis pluribus cum apostolico papa Iohanne, omnium iudicio probatum est accusatores eius non nulla in parte falsas contra eum machinasse calumnias; scriptumque a praefato papa regibus Anglorum Aedilredo et Aldfrido, ut eum in episcopatum suum, eo quod iniuste fuerit condemnatus, facerent recipi.

Iuuit autem causam absolutionis eius lectio synodi beatae memoriae papae Agathonis, quae quondam ipso praesente in urbe atque in eodem concilio inter episcopos residente, ut praediximus, acta est. Cum ergo causa exigente synodus eadem coram nobilibus et frequentia populi, iubente apostolico papa, diebus aliquot legeretur, uentum est ad locum, ubi scriptum erat: 'Uilfridus Deo amabilis episcopus Eboracae ciuitatis, apostolicam sedem de sua causa appellans, et ab hac potestate de certis incertisque rebus absolutus,' et cetera, quae supra posuimus. Quod ubi lectum est, stupor adprehendit audientes; et silente lectore coeperunt alterutrum requirere, quis esset ille Uilfridus episcopus. Tum Bonifatius consiliarius apostolici papae, et alii perplures, qui eum temporibus Agathonis papae ibi uiderant dicebant ipsum esse episcopum, qui nuper Romam accusatus a suis, atque ab apostolica sede iudicandus aduenerit: 'qui iamdudum,' inquit, 'aeque accusatus huc adueniens, mox audita ac diiudicata causa et controuersia utriusque partis, a beatae memoriae papa Agathone probatus est contra fas a suo episcopatu repulsus; et tanti apud eum habitus est, ut ipsum in concilio, quod congregarat, episcoporum, quasi uirum incorruptae fidei, et animi probi residere praeciperet.' Quibus auditis dicebant omnes una cum ipso pontifice, uirum tantae auctoritatis, qui per XL prope annos episcopatu fungebatur, nequaquam damnari debere, sed ad integrum culpis accusationum absolutum patriam cum honore reuerti.

Qui cum Britanniam remeans in Galliarum partes deuenisset, tactus est infirmitate repentina, et ea crescente adeo pressus, ut neque equo uchi posset, sed manibus ministrorum portaretur in grabato. Sic delatus in Maeldum ciuitatem Galliae IIII diebus ac noctibus quasi mortuus iacebat, halitu tantum pertenui, quia uiueret, demonstrans.

Cumque ita sine cibo et potu, sine uoce et auditu, quadriduo perseueraret, quinta demum inlucescente die, quasi de graui experrectus somno, exurgens resedit; apertisque oculis uidit circa se choros psallentium simul et flentium fratrum; ac modicum suspirans interrogauit, ubi esset Acca presbyter; qui statim uocatus intrauit, et uidens eum melius habentem, ac loqui iam

ualem, flexis genibus gratias egit Deo cum omnibus, qui aderant, fratribus.

Et cum parum consedissent, ac de supernis iudiciis trepidi aliqua confabulari coepissent, iussit pontifex ceteros ad horam egredi, et ad Accan presbyterum ita loqui exorsus est:

‘Uisio mihi modo tremenda apparuit, quam te audire ac silentio tegere uolo, donec sciam, quid de me fieri uelit Deus. Adstitit enim mihi quidam candido praeclarus habitu, dicens se Michaelem esse archangelum: “et ob hoc,” inquit, “missus sum, ut te a morte reuocem; donauit enim tibi Dominus uitam per orationes ac lacrimas discipulorum ac fratrum tuorum, et per intercessionem beatae suae genetricis semperque uirginis Mariae. Quapropter dico tibi, quia modo quidem ab infirmitate hac sanaberis; sed paratus esto, quia post quadriennium reuertens uisitabo te; patriam uero perueniens, maximam possessionum tuarum, quae tibi ablatae sunt, portionem recipies, atque in pace tranquilla uitam terminabis”.’ Conualuit igitur episcopus, cunctis gaudentibus, ac Deo gratias agentibus, coeptoque itinere Britanniam uenit.

Lectis autem epistulis, quas ab apostolico papa aduexerat, Berctuald archiepiscopus, et Aedilred quondam rex, tunc autem abbas, libentissime fauerunt; qui uidelicet Aedilred accitum ad se Coinredum, quem pro se regem fecerat, amicum episcopo fieri petiit, et inpetrauit. Sed Aldfrid Nordanhymbrorum rex eum suscipere contempsit, nec longo tempore superfuit; unde factum est, ut, regnante Osredo filio eius, mox synodo facta iuxta fluuium Nidd, post aliquantum utriusque partis conflictum, tandem cunctis fauentibus in praesulatum sit suae receptus ecclesiae. Sicque IIII annis, id est usque ad diem obitus sui, uitam duxit in pace.

Defunctus est autem in monasterio suo, quod habebat in prouincia Undalum sub regimine Cudualdi abbatis; et ministerio fratrum perlatus in primum suum monasterium, quod uocatur Inhrypum, positus est in ecclesia beati apostoli Petri iuxta altare ad Austrum, ut et supra docuimus; et hoc de illo supra epitaphium scriptum:

Uilfridus hic magnus requiescit corpore praesul, Hanc Domino qui aulam ductus pietatis amore Fecit, et eximio sacrauit nomine Petri, Cui clauis caeli Christus dedit arbiter orbis;

Atque auro ac Tyrio deuotus uestiit ostro. Quin etiam sublime crucis, radiante metallo, Hic posuit tropaeum, nec non et quattuor auro Scribi euangelii praecepit in ordine libros;

Ac thecam e rutilo his condignam condidit auro;

Paschalis qui etiam sollemnia tempora cursus Catholici ad iustum correxit dogma canonis, Quem statuere patres, dubioque errore remoto, Certa suae genti ostendit moderamina ritus;

Inque locis istis monachorum examina crebra Colligit, ac monitis cauit,

quae regula patrum Sedulus instituit; multisque domique forisque lactatus nimium per tempora longa periclis, Quindecies ternos postquam egit episcopus annos, Transiit, et gaudens caelestia regna petiuit.

Dona, Iesu, ut grex pastoris calle sequatur.

Chap. XIX.

How Coinred, king of the Mercians, and Offa, king of the East Saxons, ended their days at Rome, in the monastic habit; and of the life and death of Bishop Wilfrid. [709 a.d.]

In the fourth year of the reign of Osred, Coenred, who had for some time nobly governed the kingdom of the Mercians, much more nobly quitted the sceptre of his kingdom. For he went to Rome, and there receiving the tonsure and becoming a monk, when Constantine was pope, he continued to his last hour in prayer and fasting and alms-deeds at the threshold of the Apostles. He was succeeded in the throne by Ceolred, the son of Ethelred, who had governed the kingdom before Coenred. With him went the son of Sighere, the king of the East Saxons whom we mentioned before, by name Offa, a youth of a most pleasing age and comeliness, and greatly desired by all his nation to have and to hold the sceptre of the kingdom. He, with like devotion, quitted wife, and lands, and kindred and country, for Christ and for the Gospel, that he might "receive an hundred-fold in this life, and in the world to come life everlasting." He also, when they came to the holy places at Rome, received the tonsure, and ending his life in the monastic habit, attained to the vision of the blessed Apostles in Heaven, as he had long desired.

The same year that they departed from Britain, the great bishop, Wilfrid, ended his days in the province called Inundalum, after he had been bishop forty-five years. His body, being laid in a coffin, was carried to his monastery, which is called Inhrypum, and buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, with the honour due to so great a prelate. Concerning whose manner of life, let us now turn back, and briefly make mention of the things which were done. Being a boy of a good disposition, and virtuous beyond his years, he conducted himself so modestly and discreetly in all points, that he was deservedly beloved, respected, and cherished by his elders as one of themselves. At fourteen years of age he chose rather the monastic than the secular life; which, when he had signified to his father, for his mother was dead, he readily consented to his godly wishes and desires, and advised him to persist in that wholesome purpose. Wherefore he came to the isle of Lindisfarne, and there giving himself to the service of the monks, he strove diligently to learn and to practise those things which belong to monastic purity and piety; and being of a ready wit, he speedily learned the psalms and some other books, having not yet received the tonsure, but being in no small measure marked by those virtues of humility and obedience which are more

important than the tonsure; for which reason he was justly loved by his elders and his equals. Having served God some years in that monastery, and being a youth of a good understanding, he perceived that the way of virtue delivered by the Scots was in no wise perfect, and he resolved to go to Rome, to see what ecclesiastical or monastic rites were in use at the Apostolic see. When he told the brethren, they commended his design, and advised him to carry out that which he purposed. He forthwith went to Queen Eanfled, for he was known to her, and it was by her counsel and support that he had been admitted into the aforesaid monastery, and he told her of his desire to visit the threshold of the blessed Apostles. She, being pleased with the youth's good purpose, sent him into Kent, to King Earconbert, who was her uncle's son, requesting that he would send him to Rome in an honourable manner. At that time, Honorius, one of the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory, a man very highly instructed in ecclesiastical learning, was archbishop there. When he had tarried there for a space, and, being a youth of an active spirit, was diligently applying himself to learn those things which came under his notice, another youth, called Biscop, surnamed Benedict, of the English nobility, arrived there, being likewise desirous to go to Rome, of whom we have before made mention.

The king gave him Wilfrid for a companion, and bade Wilfrid conduct him to Rome. When they came to Lyons, Wilfrid was detained there by Dalfinus, the bishop of that city; but Benedict hastened on to Rome. For the bishop was delighted with the youth's prudent discourse, the grace of his comely countenance, his eager activity, and the consistency and maturity of his thoughts; for which reason he plentifully supplied him and his companions with all necessaries, as long as they stayed with him; and further offered, if he would have it, to commit to him the government of no small part of Gaul, to give him a maiden daughter of his own brother to wife, and to regard him always as his adopted son. But Wilfrid thanked him for the loving-kindness which he was pleased to show to a stranger, and answered, that he had resolved upon another course of life, and for that reason had left his country and set out for Rome.

Hereupon the bishop sent him to Rome, furnishing him with a guide and supplying plenty of all things requisite for his journey, earnestly requesting that he would come that way, when he returned into his own country. Wilfrid arriving at Rome, and daily giving himself with all earnestness to prayer and the study of ecclesiastical matters, as he had purposed in his mind, gained the friendship of the most holy and learned Boniface, the archdeacon, who was also counsellor to the Apostolic Pope, by whose instruction he learned in their order the four Gospels, and the true computation of Easter; and many other things appertaining to ecclesiastical discipline, which he could not learn in his own country, he acquired from the teaching of that same master. When he had spent some months there, in successful study, he returned into Gaul, to

Dalfinus; and having stayed with him three years, received from him the tonsure, and Dalfinus esteemed him so highly in love that he had thoughts of making him his heir; but this was prevented by the bishop's cruel death, and Wilfrid was reserved to be a bishop of his own, that is, the English, nation. For Queen Baldhild sent soldiers with orders to put the bishop to death; whom Wilfrid, as his clerk, attended to the place where he was to be beheaded, being very desirous, though the bishop strongly opposed it, to die with him; but the executioners, understanding that he was a stranger, and of the English nation, spared him, and would not put him to death with his bishop.

Returning to Britain, he won the friendship of King Alchfrid, who had learnt to follow always and love the catholic rules of the Church; and therefore finding him to be a Catholic, he gave him presently land of ten families at the place called Stanford; and not long after, the monastery, with land of thirty families, at the place called Inhrypum; which place he had formerly given to those that followed the doctrine of the Scots, to build a monastery there. But, forasmuch as they afterwards, being given the choice, had rather quit the place than adopt the Catholic Easter and other canonical rites, according to the custom of the Roman Apostolic Church, he gave the same to him whom he found to be instructed in better discipline and better customs.

At the same time, by the said king's command, he was ordained priest in the same monastery, by Agilbert, bishop of the Gewissae above-mentioned, the king being desirous that a man of so much learning and piety should attend him constantly as his special priest and teacher; and not long after, when the Scottish sect had been exposed and banished, as was said above, he, with the advice and consent of his father Oswy, sent him into Gaul, to be consecrated as his bishop, when he was about thirty years of age, the same Agilbert being then bishop of the city of Paris. Eleven other bishops met at the consecration of the new bishop, and that function was most honourably performed. Whilst he yet tarried beyond the sea, the holy man, Ceadda, was consecrated bishop of York by command of King Oswy, as has been said above; and having nobly ruled that church three years, he retired to take charge of his monastery of Laestingaeu, and Wilfrid was made bishop of all the province of the Northumbrians.

Afterwards, in the reign of Egfrid, he was expelled from his bishopric, and others were consecrated bishops in his stead, of whom mention has been made above. Designing to go to Rome, to plead his cause before the Apostolic Pope, he took ship, and was driven by a west wind into Frisland, and honourably received by that barbarous people and their King Aldgils, to whom he preached Christ, and he instructed many thousands of them in the Word of truth, washing them from the defilement of their sins in the Saviour's font. Thus he began there the work of the Gospel which was afterwards finished with great devotion by the most reverend bishop of Christ, Wilbrord. Having

spent the winter there successfully among this new people of God, he set out again on his way to Rome, where his cause being tried before Pope Agatho and many bishops, he was by the judgement of them all acquitted of all blame, and declared worthy of his bishopric.

At the same time, the said Pope Agatho assembling a synod at Rome, of one hundred and twenty-five bishops, against those who asserted that there was only one will and operation in our Lord and Saviour, ordered Wilfrid also to be summoned, and, sitting among the bishops, to declare his own faith and the faith of the province or island whence he came; and he and his people being found orthodox in their faith, it was thought fit to record the same among the acts of that synod, which was done in in this manner: “Wilfrid, the beloved of God, bishop of the city of York, appealing to the Apostolic see, and being by that authority acquitted of every thing, whether specified against him or not, and being appointed to sit in judgement with one hundred and twenty-five other bishops in the synod, made confession of the true and catholic faith, and confirmed the same with his subscription in the name of all the northern part of Britain and Ireland, and the islands inhabited by the nations of the English and Britons, as also by the Scots and Picts.”

After this, returning into Britain, he converted the province of the South Saxons from their idolatrous worship to the faith of Christ. He also sent ministers of the Word to the Isle of Wight; and in the second year of Aldfrid, who reigned after Egfrid, was restored to his see and bishopric by that king’s invitation. Nevertheless, five years after, being again accused, he was deprived of his bishopric by the same king and certain bishops. Coming to Rome, he was allowed to make his defence in the presence of his accusers, before a number of bishops and the Apostolic Pope John. It was shown by the judgement of them all, that his accusers had in part laid false accusations to his charge; and the aforesaid Pope wrote to the kings of the English, Ethelred and Aldfrid, to cause him to be restored to his bishopric, because he had been unjustly condemned.

His acquittal was much forwarded by the reading of the acts of the synod of Pope Agatho, of blessed memory, which had been formerly held, when Wilfrid was in Rome and sat in council among the bishops, as has been said before. For the acts of that synod being, as the case required, read, by order of the Apostolic Pope, before the nobility and a great number of the people for some days, they came to the place where it was written, “Wilfrid, the beloved of God, bishop of the city of York, appealing to the Apostolic see, and being by that authority acquitted of everything, whether specified against him or not,” and the rest as above stated. This being read, the hearers were amazed, and the reader ceasing, they began to ask of one another, who that Bishop Wilfrid was. Then Boniface, the Pope’s counsellor, and many others, who had seen him there in the days of Pope Agatho, said that he was the same bishop that lately came to Rome, to be tried by the Apostolic see, being accused by

his people, and “who, said they, having long since come here upon the like accusation, the cause and contention of both parties being heard and examined, was proved by Pope Agatho, of blessed memory, to have been wrongfully expelled from his bishopric, and was held in such honour by him, that he commanded him to sit in the council of bishops which he had assembled, as a man of untainted faith and an upright mind.” This being heard, the Pope and all the rest said, that a man of so great authority, who had held the office of a bishop for nearly forty years, ought by no means to be condemned, but being altogether cleared of the faults laid to his charge, should return home with honour.

When he came to Gaul, on his way back to Britain, on a sudden he fell sick, and the sickness increasing, he was so weighed down by it, that he could not ride, but was carried in his bed by the hands of his servants. Being thus come to the city of Maeldum, in Gaul, he lay four days and nights, as if he had been dead, and only by his faint breathing showed that he had any life in him. Having continued thus four days, without meat or drink, without speech or hearing, at length, on the fifth day, at daybreak, as it were awakening out of a deep sleep, he raised himself and sat up, and opening his eyes, saw round about him a company of brethren singing psalms and weeping. Sighing gently, he asked where Acca, the priest, was. This man, straightway being called, came in, and seeing him somewhat recovered and able to speak, knelt down, and gave thanks to God, with all the brethren there present. When they had sat awhile and begun to discourse, with great awe, of the judgements of heaven, the bishop bade the rest go out for a time, and spoke to the priest, Acca, after this manner:

“A dread vision has even now appeared to me, which I would have you hear and keep secret, till I know what God will please to do with me. There stood by me a certain one, glorious in white raiment, and he told me that he was Michael, the Archangel, and said, ‘I am sent to call you back from death: for the Lord has granted you life, through the prayers and tears of your disciples and brethren, and the intercession of His Blessed Mother Mary, of perpetual virginity; wherefore I tell you, that you shall now recover from this sickness; but be ready, for I will return and visit you at the end of four years. And when you come into your country, you shall recover the greater part of the possessions that have been taken from you, and shall end your days in peace and quiet.’” The bishop accordingly recovered, whereat all men rejoiced and gave thanks to God, and setting forward on his journey, he arrived in Britain.

Having read the letters which he brought from the Apostolic Pope, Bertwald, the archbishop, and Ethelred, sometime king, but then abbot, readily took his part; for the said Ethelred, calling to him Coenred, whom he had made king in his own stead, begged him to be friends with Wilfrid, in which request he prevailed; nevertheless Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians,

disdained to receive him. But he died soon after, and so it came to pass that, during the reign of his son Osred, when a synod was assembled before long by the river Nidd, after some contention on both sides, at length, by the consent of all, he was restored to the government of his own church; and thus he lived in peace four years, till the day of his death. He died in his monastery, which he had in the province of Undalum, under the government of the Abbot Cuthbald; and by the ministry of the brethren, he was carried to his first monastery which is called Inhrypum, and buried in the church of the blessed Apostle Peter, hard by the altar on the south side, as has been mentioned above, and this epitaph was written over him:

“Here rests the body of the great Bishop Wilfrid, who, for love of piety, built these courts and consecrated them with the noble name of Peter, to whom Christ, the Judge of all the earth, gave the keys of Heaven. And devoutly he clothed them with gold and Tyrian purple; yea, and he placed here the trophy of the Cross, of shining ore, uplifted high; moreover he caused the four books of the Gospel to be written in gold in their order, and he gave a case meet for them of ruddy gold. And he also brought the holy season of Easter, returning in its course, to accord with the true teaching of the catholic rule which the Fathers fixed, and, banishing all doubt and error, gave his nation sure guidance in their worship. And in this place he gathered a great throng of monks, and with all diligence safeguarded the precepts which the Fathers’ rule enjoined. And long time sore vexed by many a peril at home and abroad, when he had held the office of a bishop forty-five years, he passed away and with joy departed to the heavenly kingdom. Grant, O Jesus, that the flock may follow in the path of the shepherd.”

CHAP. 20

Anno post obitum praefati patris proximo, id est quinto Osredi regis, reuerentissimus pater Hadrianus abbas, cooperator in uerbo Dei Theodori beatae memoriae episcopi, defunctus est, et in monasterio suo in ecclesia beatae Dei genetricis sepultus; qui est annus XLmus primus, ex quo a Uitaliano papa directus est cum Theodoro; ex quo autem Brittaniam uenit, XXXIX. Cuius doctrinae simul et Theodori inter alia testimonium perhibet, quod Albinus discipulus eius, qui monasterio ipsius in regimine successit, in tantum studiis scripturarum institutus est, ut Grecam quidem linguam non parua ex parte, Latinam uero non minus quam Anglorum, quae sibi naturalis est, nouerit.

Suscepit uero pro Uilfrido episcopatum Hagustaldensis ecclesiae Acca presbyter eius, uir et ipse strenuissimus, et coram Deo et hominibus magnificus; qui et ipsius ecclesiae suae, quae in beati Andreae apostoli honorem consecrata est, aedificium multifario decore ac mirificis ampliavit operibus. Dedit namque operam, quod et hodie facit, ut acquisitis undecumque reliquiis beatorum apostolorum et martyrum Christi, in uenerationem illorum poneret altaria, distinctis porticibus in hoc ipsum intra muros eiusdem ecclesiae, sed et historias passionis eorum, una cum ceteris ecclesiasticis uoluminibus, summa industria congregans, amplissimam ibi ac nobilissimam bibliothecam fecit, nec non et uasa sancta, et luminaria, aliaque huiusmodi, quae ad ornatum domus Dei pertinent, studiosissime parauit. Cantatorem quoque egregium, uocabulo Maban, qui a successoribus discipulorum beati papae Gregorii in Cantia fual cantandi sonos edoctus, ad se suosque instituendos accersiit, ac per annos XII tenuit; quatinus et, quae illi non nouerant, carmina ecclesiastica doceret; et ea, quae quondam cognita longo usu uel neglegentia inueterare coeperunt, huius doctrina priscum renouarentur in statum. Nam et ipse episcopus Acca cantator erat peritissimus, quomodo etiam in litteris sanctis doctissimus, et in catholicae fidei confessione castissimus, in ecclesiasticae quoque institutionis regulis solertissimus exstiterat; et usquedum praemia piae deuotionis accipiat, existere non desistit; utpote qui a pueritia in clero sanctissimi ac Deo dilecti Bosa Eboracensis episcopi nutritus atque eruditus est; deinde ad Uilfridum episcopum spe melioris propositi adueniens, omnem in eius obsequio usque ad obitum illius expleuit aetatem; cum quo etiam Romam ueniens multa illic, quae in patria nequiuera, ecclesiae sanctae institutis utilia didicit.

Chap. XX.

How Albinus succeeded to the godly Abbot Hadrian, and Acca to Bishop Wilfrid. [709 a.d.]

The next year after the death of the aforesaid father, which was the fifth year of King Osred, the most reverend father, Abbot Hadrian, fellow labourer in the Word of God with Bishop Theodore of blessed memory, died, and was buried in the church of the Blessed Mother of God, in his own monastery, this being the forty-first year after he was sent by Pope Vitalian with Theodore, and the thirty-ninth after his arrival in England. Among other proofs of his learning, as well as Theodore's, there is this testimony, that Albinus, his disciple, who succeeded him in the government of his monastery, was so well instructed in literary studies, that he had no small knowledge of the Greek tongue, and knew the Latin as well as the English, which was his native language.

Acca, his priest, succeeded Wilfrid in the bishopric of the church of Hagustald, being likewise a man of zeal and great in noble works in the sight of God and man. He enriched the structure of his church, which is dedicated in honour of the blessed Apostle Andrew with manifold adornments and marvellous workmanship. For he gave all diligence, as he does to this day, to procure relics of the blessed Apostles and martyrs of Christ from all parts, and to raise altars in their honour in separate side-chapels built for the purpose within the walls of the same church. Besides which, he industriously gathered the histories of their martyrdom, together with other ecclesiastical writings, and erected there a large and noble library. He likewise carefully provided holy vessels, lamps, and other such things as appertain to the adorning of the house of God. He in like manner invited to him a notable singer called Maban, who had been taught to sing by the successors of the disciples of the blessed Pope Gregory in Kent, to instruct himself and his clergy, and kept him twelve years, to the end that he might teach such Church music as they did not know, and by his teaching restore to its former state that which was corrupted either by long use, or through neglect. For Bishop Acca himself was a most skilful singer, as well as most learned in Holy Writ, sound in the confession of the catholic faith, and well versed in the rules of ecclesiastical custom; nor does he cease to walk after this manner, till he receive the rewards of his pious devotion. For he was brought up from boyhood and instructed among the clergy of the most holy and beloved of God, Bosa, bishop of York. Afterwards, coming to Bishop Wilfrid in the hope of a better plan of life, he spent the rest of his days in attendance on him till that bishop's death, and going with him to Rome, learned there many profitable things concerning the ordinances of the Holy Church, which he could not have learned in his own country.

CHAP. 21

Eo tempore Naiton rex Pictorum, qui septentrionales Britanniae plagas inhabitant, admonitus ecclesiasticarum frequenti meditatione scripturarum, abrenuntiavit errori, quo eatenus in obseruatione paschae cum sua gente tenebatur, et se suosque omnes ad catholicum dominicae resurrectionis tempus celebrandum perduxit. Quod ut facilius et maiore auctoritate perficeret, quaesiuit auxilium de gente Anglorum, quos iamdudum ad exemplum sanctae Romanae et apostolicae ecclesiae suam religionem instituisse cognouit. Siquidem misit legatarios ad uirum uenerabilem Ceolfridum, abbatem monasterii beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, quod est ad ostium Uiuri amnis, et iuxta amnem Tinam, in loco, qui uocatur Ingyrium, cui ipse post Benedictum, de quo supra diximus, gloriosissime praefuit; postulans, ut exhortatorias sibi litteras mitteret, quibus potentius confutare posset eos, qui pascha non suo tempore obseruare praesumerent; simul et de tonsurae modo uel ratione, qua clericos insigniri deceret; excepto, quod etiam ipse in his non parua ex parte esset inbutus. Sed et architectos sibi mitti petiit, qui iuxta morem Romanorum ecclesiam de lapide in gente ipsius facerent, promittens hanc in honorem beati apostolorum principis dedicandam; se quoque ipsum cum suis omnibus morem sanctae Romanae et apostolicae ecclesiae semper imitaturum, in quantum dumtaxat tam longe a Romanorum loquella et natione segregati hunc ediscere potuissent. Cuius religiosis uotis ac precibus fauens reuerentissimus abba Ceolfrid misit architectos, quos petebatur, misit illi et litteras scriptas in hunc modum:

‘Domino excellentissimo et gloriosissimo regi Naitano, Ceolfrid abbas in Domino salutem.

‘Catholicam sancti paschae obseruantiam, quam a nobis, rex Deo deuote, religioso studio quaesisti, promptissime ac libentissime tuo desiderio, iuxta quod ab apostolica sede didicimus, patefacere satagimus. Scimus namque caelitus sanctae ecclesiae donatum, quotiens ipsi rerum domini discendae, docendae, custodiendae ueritati operam inpendunt. Nam et uere omnino dixit quidam saecularium scriptorum, quia felicissimo mundus statu ageretur, si uel reges philosopharentur, uel regnarent philosophi. Quod si de philosophia huius mundi uere intellegere, de statu huius mundi merito diligere potuit homo huius mundi; quanto magis ciuibus patriae caelestis in hoc mundo peregrinantibus optandum est, et totis animi uiribus supplicandum, ut, quo plus in mundo quique ualent, eo amplius eius, qui super omnia est, Iudicis mandatis auscultare contendant, atque ad haec obseruanda secum eos quoque, qui sibi commissi sunt, exemplis simul et auctoritate instituant?

‘Tres sunt ergo regulae sacris inditae litteris, quibus paschae celebrandi tempus nobis praefinitum, nulla prorsus humana licet auctoritate mutari; e quibus duae in lege Mosi diuinitus statutae, tertia in euangelio per effectum

dominicae passionis et resurrectionis adiuncta est. Praecepit enim lex, ut pascha primo mense anni et tertia eiusdem mensis septimana, id est a XVa die usque ad XXIam, fieri deberet; additum est per institutionem apostolicam ex euangelio, ut in ipsa tertia septimana diem dominicam expectare, atque in ea temporis paschalis initium tenere debeamus.

Quam uidelicet regulam triformem quisquis rite custodierit, numquam in adnotatione festi paschalis errabit. Uerum si de his singulis enucleatius ac latius audire desideras, scriptum est in Exodo, ubi liberandus de Aegypto populus Israel primum pascha facere iubetur, quia: “dixerit Dominus ad Moisen et Aaron: Mensis iste uobis principium mensium primus erit in mensibus anni. Loquimini ad uniuersum coetum filiorum Israel et dicite eis: Xa die mensis huius tollat unusquisque agnum per familias et domus suas.” Et paulo post: “Et seruabitis eum usque ad XIIIam diem mensis huius; immolabitque eum uniuersa multitudo filiorum Israel ad uesperam.”

Quibus uerbis manifestissime constat, quod ita in obseruatione paschali mentio fit diei XIIIae, ut non tamen in ipsa die XIIIa pascha fieri praecipiat; sed adueniente tandem uespera diei XIIIae, id est XVa luna, quae initium tertiae septimanae faciat, in caeli faciem prodeunte, agnus immolari iubeatur; et quod ipsa sit nox XVae lunae, in qua percussis Aegyptiis Israel est a longa seruitute redemptus. “VII,” inquit, “diebus azyma comedetis.” Quibus item uerbis tota tertia septimana eiusdem primi mensis decernitur sollemnis esse debere. Sed ne putaremus easdem VII dies a XIIIa usque ad XXam esse computandas, continuo subiecit: “In die primo non erit fermentum in domibus uestris. Quicumque comederit fermentum, peribit anima illa de Israel, a die primo usque ad diem septimum,” et cetera, usquedum ait: “In eadem enim ipsa die educam exercitum uestrum de terra Aegypti.”

‘Primum ergo diem azymorum appellat eum, in quo exercitum eorum esset educturus de Aegypto. Constat autem, quia non XIIIa die, in cuius uespera agnus est immolatus, et quae proprie pascha siue phase dicitur; sed XVa sunt educti ex Aegypto, sicut in libro Numerorum apertissime scribitur: “Profecti igitur de Ramesse XVa die mensis primi, altera die phase, filii Israel in manu excelsa.” VII ergo dies azymorum, in quarum prima eductus est populus Domini ex Aegypto, ab initio, ut diximus, tertiae septimanae, hoc est a XVa die mensis primi usque ad XXIam eiusdem mensis diem completam computari oportet. Porro dies XIIIa extra hunc numerum separatim sub paschae titulo praenotatur, sicut Exodi sequentia patenter edocent; ubi cum dictum esset: “In eadem enim ipsa die educam exercitum uestrum de terra Aegypti;” protinus adiunctum est: “Et custodietis diem istum in generationes uestras ritu perpetuo. Primo mense, XIIIa die mensis comedetis azyma usque ad diem XXIam eiusdem mensis ad uesperam. VII diebus fermentatum non inuenietur in domibus uestris.” Quis enim non uideat, a XIIIa usque ad XXIam non VII solummodo, sed octo potius esse dies, si et ipsa XIIIa adnumeretur?

Sin autem, ut diligentius explorata scripturae ueritas docet, a uespera diei

XIII^{ae} usque ad uesperam XXI^{ae} computauerimus, uidebimus profecto, quod ita dies XIII^a uesperam suam in festi paschalis initium prorogat, ut non amplius tota sacra sollemnitas, quam VII tantummodo noctes cum totidem diebus conprehendat; unde uera esse probatur nostra definitio, qua tempus paschale primo mense anni et tertia eius ebdomada celebrandum esse diximus. Ueraciter enim tertia agitur ebdomada, quod a uespera XIII^{ae} diei incipit, et in uespera XXI^{ae} conpletur.

‘Postquam uero pascha nostrum immolatus est Christus, diemque nobis dominicam, quae apud antiquos una uel prima sabbati siue sabbatorum uocatur, gaudio suae resurrectionis fecit esse sollemnem; ita hanc apostolica traditio festis paschalibus inseruit, ut nil omnimodis de tempore paschae legalis praeoccupandum, nihil minuendum esse decerneret. Quin potius statuit, ut expectaretur iuxta praeceptum legis idem primus anni mensis, expectaretur XIII^a dies illius, expectaretur uespera eiusdem. Et cum haec dies in sabbatum forte inciderit, tolleretur unusquisque agnum per familias et domus suas, et immolaret eum ad uesperam, id est praepararent omnes ecclesiae per orbem, quae unam catholicam faciunt, panem et uinum in mysterium carnis et sanguinis agni immaculati, qui abstulit peccata mundi; et praecedente congrua lectionum orationum, caerimoniarum paschalium sollemnitate, offerrent haec Domino in spem futurae suae redemptionis. Ipsa est enim eadem nox, in qua de Aegypto per sanguinem agni Israelitica plebs erepta est; ipsa, in qua per resurrectionem Christi liberatus est a morte aeterna populus omnis Dei. Mane autem inlucescente die dominica, primam paschalis festi diem celebrarent. Ipsa est enim dies, in qua resurrectionis suae gloriam Dominus multifario pia reuelationis gaudio discipulis patefecit. Ipsa prima dies azymorum, de qua multum distincte in Leuitico scriptum est: “Mense primo, XIII^a die mensis ad uesperam phase Domini est, et XV^a die mensis huius sollemnitas azymorum Domini est. VII diebus azyma comedetis. Dies primus erit celeberrimus, sanctusque.”

‘Si ergo fieri posset, ut semper in diem XV^{um} primi mensis, id est in lunam XV^{am} dominica dies incurreret, uno semper eodemque tempore cum antiquo Dei populo, quanquam sacramentorum genere discreto, sicut una eademque fide, pascha celebrare possemus. Quia uero dies septimanae non aequali cum luna tramite procurrit, decreuit apostolica traditio, quae per beatum Petrum Romae praedicata, per Marcum euangelistam et interpretem ipsius Alexandriae confirmata est, ut adueniente primo mense, adueniente in eo uespera diei XIII^{ae}, expectetur etiam dies dominica, a XV^a usque ad XXI^{am} diem eiusdem mensis. In quacumque enim harum inuenta fuerit, merito in ea pascha celebrabitur; quia nimirum haec ad numerum pertinet illarum VII dierum, quibus azyma celebrari iubetur. Itaque fit, ut numquam pascha nostrum a septimana mensis primi tertia in utramuis partem declinet; sed uel totam eam, id est omnes VII legalium azymorum dies, uel certe aliquos de illis teneat. Nam etsi saltim unum ex eis, hoc est ipsum septimum

adprehenderit, quem tam excellenter scriptura commendat: “Dies autem,” inquit, “septimus erit celebrior et sanctior, nullumque seruile opus fiet in eo”; nullus arguere nos poterit, quod non recte dominicum paschae diem, quem de euangelio suscepimus, in ipsa, quam lex statuit, tertia primi mensis ebdomada celebremus.’

‘Cuius obseruantiae catholica ratione patefacta, patet e contrario error inrationabilis eorum, qui praefixos in lege terminos, nulla cogente necessitate, uel anticipare uel transcendere praesumunt.

Namque sine ratione necessitatis alicuius anticipant illi tempus in lege praescriptum, qui dominicum paschae diem a XIIIa mensis primi usque ad XXam putant lunam esse seruandum. Cum enim a uespera diei XIIIae uigilias sanctae noctis celebrare incipiunt, claret, quod illam in exordio sui paschae diem statuunt, cuius nullam omnino mentionem in decreto legis inueniunt. Et cum XXIa die mensis pascha dominicum celebrare refugiant, patet profecto, quod illam per omnia diem a sua sollemnitate secernunt, quam lex maiore prae ceteris festiuitate memorabilem saepenumero commendat; sicque diem paschae ordine peruerso, et aliquando in secunda ebdomada totam conpleant, et numquam in ebdomadae tertiae die septima ponant; rursumque, qui a XVIa die mensis saepedicti usque ad XXIIam pascha celebrandum magis autumant, non minore utique errore, tametsi altero latere a recto ueritatis tramite diuertunt, et ueluti naufragia Scyllae fugientes, in Charybdi uoraginem submergendi decidunt. Nam cum a luna XVIa primi mensis oriente, id est a uespera diei XVae pascha incipiendum doceant; nimirum constat, quia XIIIam diem mensis eiusdem, quam lex primitus et praecipue commendat, a sua prorsus sollemnitate secludunt; ita ut XVae, in qua populus Dei ab Aegyptia seruitute redemptus est, et in qua Dominus suo mundum sanguine a peccatorum tenebris liberauit, in qua etiam sepultus spem nobis post mortem beatæ quietis tribuit, uix uesperam tangerent.

‘Idemque poenam erroris sui in semet ipsos recipientes, cum in XXIIa die mensis paschae diem statuunt dominicum, legitimos utique terminos paschae aperta transgressione uiolant, utpote qui ab illius diei uespera pascha incipiunt, in qua hoc lex consummari et perfici debere decreuit, illam in pascha diem adsignent primam, cuius in lege mentio nulla usquam repperitur, id est quartae primam septimanae. Qui utrique non solum in definitione et computo lunaris aetatis, sed et in mensis primi nonnumquam inuentione falluntur.

Quae disputatio maior est, quam epistula hac uel ualeat comprehendere, uel debeat. Tantum hoc dicam, quod per aequinoctium uernale semper inerrabiliter possit inueniri, qui mensis iuxta computum lunae primus anni, qui esse debeat ultimus. Aequinoctium autem iuxta sententiam omnium Orientalium et maxime Aegyptiorum, qui prae ceteris doctoribus calculandi palmam tenent, XII Kalendarum Aprilium die prouenire consuevit, ut etiam ipsi horologica inspectione probamus. Quaecumque ergo luna ante

aequinoctium plena est, XIIIa uidelicet uel XVa existens, haec ad praecedentis anni nouissimum pertinet mensem, ideoque paschae celebrando habilis non est. Quae uero post aequinoctium, uel in ipso aequinoctio suum plenilunium habet, in hac absque ulla dubietate, quia primi mensis est, et antiquos pascha celebrare solitos, et nos, ubi dominica dies aduenerit, celebrare debere noscendum est. Quod ita fieri oportere illa nimirum ratio cogit, quia in Genesi scriptum est, quod “fecit Deus duo magna luminaria; luminare maius, ut praesset diei; et luminare minus, ut praesset nocti”; uel, sicut alia dicit editio, “luminare maius in inchoationem diei, et luminare minus in inchoationem noctis.” Sicut ergo prius sol a medio procedens orientis, aequinoctium uernale suo praefixit exortu; deinde luna, sole ad uesperam occidente, et ipsa plena a medio secuta est orientis; ita omnibus annis idem primus lunae mensis eodem necesse est ordine seruari, ut non ante aequinoctium, sed uel ipso aequinoctii die, sicut in principio factum est, uel eo transceso plenilunium habere debeat. At si uno saltem die plenilunium tempus aequinoctii praecesserit, non hanc primo mensi anni incipientis, sed ultimo potius praeteriti lunam esse adscribendam; et ideo festis paschalibus inhabilem memorata ratio probat.

‘Quod si mysticam quoque uos in his rationem audire delectat, primo mense anni, qui etiam mensis nouorum dictus est, pascha facere iubemur; quia renouato ad amorem caelestium spiritu mentis nostrae, sacramenta dominicae resurrectionis et ereptionis nostrae celebrare debemus, tertia eiusdem mensis septimana facere praecipimur; quia ante legem et sub lege promissus, tertio tempore saeculi cum gratia uenit ipse, qui pascha nostrum immolaretur Christus; quia tertia post immolationem suae passionis die resurgens a mortuis, hanc dominicam uocari, et in ea nos annuatim paschalia eiusdem resurrectionis uoluit festa celebrare; quia nos quoque ita solum ueraciter eius sollemnia celebramus, si per fidem, spem et caritatem pascha, id est transitum, de hoc mundo ad Patrem, cum illo facere curamus. Post aequinoctium ueris plenilunium mensis praecipimur obseruare paschalis; ut uidelicet primo sol longiorem nocte faciat diem, deinde luna plenum suae lucis orbem mundo praesentet; quia primo quidem sol iustitiae, in cuius pennis est sanitas, id est Dominus Iesus, per resurrectionis suae triumphum cunctas mortis tenebras superauit; ac sic ascendens in caelos, misso desuper Spiritu, ecclesiam suam, quae saepe lunae uocabulo designatur, internae gratiae luce repleuit. Quem uidelicet ordinem nostrae salutis propheta contemplatus aiebat: “Eleuatus est sol, et luna stetit in ordine suo.”

‘Qui ergo plenitudinem lunae paschalis ante aequinoctium prouenire posse contenderit, talis in mysteriorum celebratione maximorum a sanctorum quidem scripturarum doctrina discordat; concordat autem eis, qui sine praeueniente gratia Christi se saluari posse confidunt; qui etsi uera lux tenebras mundi moriendo ac resurgendo numquam uicisset, perfectam se habere posse iustitiam dogmatizare praesumunt. Itaque post aequinoctialem

solis exortum, post plenilunium primi mensis hunc ex ordine subsequens, id est post completam diem eiusdem mensis XIIIam, quae cuncta ex lege obseruanda accepimus, expectamus adhuc monente euangelio in ipsa ebdomada tertia tempus diei dominicae, et sic demum uotiuu paschae nostri festa celebramus, ut indicemus nos non cum antiquis excussum Aegyptiae seruitutis iugum uenerari, sed redemptionem totius mundi, quae in antiqui Dei populi liberatione praefigurata, in Christi autem resurrectione completa est, deuota fide ac dilectione colere, utque resurrectionis etiam nostrae, quam eadem die dominica futuram credimus, spe nos certissima gaudere signemus.

‘Hic autem, quem uobis sequendum monstramus, computus paschae decennouenali circulo continetur; qui dudum quidem, hoc est ipsis apostolorum temporibus, iam seruari in ecclesia coepit, maxime Romae et Aegypti, ut supra iam diximus. Sed per industriam Eusebii, qui a beato martyre Pamphylo cognomen habet, distinctius in ordinem conpositus est; ut quod eatenus per Alexandriae pontificem singulis annis per omnes ecclesias mandari consuerat, iam deinde congesta in ordinem serie lunae XIIIae facillime posset ab omnibus sciri Cuius computum paschalis Theophilus Alexandriae praesul in centum annorum tempus Theodosio imperatori conposuit. Item successor eius Cyrillus seriem XC et V annorum in quinque decennouenalibus circulis comprehendit; post quem Dionysius Exiguus totidem alios ex ordine pari schemate subnexuit, qui ad nostra usque tempora pertinebant.

Quibus termino adpropinquantibus, tanta hodie calculorum exuberat copia, ut etiam in nostris per Britanniam ecclesiis plures sint, qui mandatis memoriae ueteribus illis Aegyptiorum argumentis, facillime possint in quotlibet spatia temporum paschales protendere circulos, etiamsi ad quingentos usque et XXX duos uoluerint annos; quibus expletis, omnia, quae ad solis et lunae, mensis et septimanae consequentiam spectant, eodem, quo prius, ordine recurrunt. Ideo autem circulos eosdem temporum instantium uobis mittere supersedimus, quia de ratione tantum temporis paschalis instrui quaerentes, ipsos uobis circulos paschae catholicos abundare probastis.

‘Uerum his de pascha succincte, ut petisti, strictimque commemoratis, tonsuram quoque, de qua pariter uobis litteras fieri uoluisti, hortor, ut ecclesiasticam et Christianae fidei congruam habere curetis. Et quidem scimus, quia neque apostoli omnes uno eodemque sunt modo adtonsi, neque nunc ecclesia catholica, sicut una fide, spe, et caritate in Deum consentit, ita etiam una atque indissimili totum per orbem tonsurae sibi forma congruit. Denique, ut superiora, id est patriarcharum, tempora respiciamus, Iob, exemplar patientiae, dum ingruente tribulationum articulo caput totondit, probauit utique, quia tempore felicitatis capillos nutrire consuerat. At Ioseph et ipse castitatis, humilitatis, pietatis, ceterarumque uirtutum exsecutor ac doctor eximius, cum seruitio absoluendus adtonsus esse legitur, patet profecto, quia tempore seruitutis intonsus in carcere crinibus manere solebat. Ecce

utrumque uir Dei diuersum ab altero uultus habitum foris praemonstrabat, quorum tamen intus conscientia in parili uirtutum sibi gratia concordabat.

‘Uerum, etsi profiteri nobis liberum est, quia tonsurae discrimen non noceat, quibus pura in Deum fides, et caritas in proximum sincera est; maxime cum numquam patribus catholicis sicut de paschae uel fidei diuersitate conflictus, ita etiam de tonsurae differentia legatur aliqua fuisse controuersia; inter omnes tamen, quas uel in ecclesia, uel in uniuerso hominum genere repperimus tonsuras, nullam magis sequendam nobis amplectendamque iure dixerim ea, quam in capite suo gestabat ille, cui se confitenti Dominus ait: “Tu es Petrus, et super hanc petram aedificabo ecclesiam meam, et portae inferni non praeualebunt aduersus eam; et tibi dabo clauis regni caelorum”; nullam magis abominandam detestandamque merito cunctis fidelibus crediderim ea, quam habebat ille, cui gratiam Spiritus Sancti conparare uolenti dicit idem Petrus: “Pecunia tua tecum sit in perditionem, quoniam donum Dei existimasti per pecuniam possideri; non est tibi pars neque sors in sermone hoc.” Neque uero ob id tantum in coronam adtondemur, quia Petrus ita adtonsus est;

sed quia Petrus in memoriam dominicae passionis ita adtonsus est, idcirco et nos, qui per eandem passionem saluari desideramus, ipsius passionis signum cum illo in uertice, summa uidelicet corporis nostri parte gestamus. Sicut enim omnis ecclesia, quia per mortem sui uiuificatoris ecclesia facta est, signum sanctae crucis eius in fronte portare consueuit ut crebro uexilli huius munimine a malignorum spirituum defendatur incursibus; crebra huius admonitione doceatur se quoque carnem suam cum uitiiis et concupiscentiis crucifigere debere; ita etiam oportet eos, qui uel monachi uotum, uel gradum clericatus habentes, artioribus se necesse habent pro Domino continentiae frenis astringere, formam quoque coronae, quam ipse in passione spineam portauit in capite, ut spinas ac tribulos peccatorum nostrorum portaret, id est exportaret et auferret a nobis, suo quemque in capite per tonsuram praeferre; ut se etiam inrisiones et obprobria pro illo libenter ac promte omnia sufferre ipso etiam frontispicio doceant; ut coronam uitae aeternae, quam repromisit Deus diligentibus se, se semper expectare, proque huius perceptione et aduersa se mundi et prospera contemnere designent.

Ceterum tonsuram eam, quam magum ferunt habuisse Simonem, quis, rogo, fidelium non statim cum ipsa magia primo detestetur et merito exsufflet aspectu? Quae in frontis quidem superficie coronae uidetur speciem praeferre; sed ubi ad ceruicem considerando perueneris, decurtatam eam, quam te uidere putabas, inuenies coronam; ut merito talem simoniaciis et non Christianis habitum conuenire cognoscas; qui in praesenti quidem uita a deceptis hominibus putabantur digni perpetuae gloria coronae; sed in ea, quae hanc sequitur uitam, non solum omni spe coronae priuati, sed aeterna insuper sunt poena damnati.

‘Neque uero me haec ita prosecutum aestimes, quasi eos, qui hanc tonsuram habent, condemnandos iudicem, si fide et operibus unitati catholicae

fauerint; immo confidenter profiteor plurimos ex eis sanctos ac Deo dignos extitisse, ex quibus est Adamnan, abbas et sacerdos Columbiensium egregius, qui cum legatus suae gentis ad Aldfridum regem missus, nostrum quoque monasterium uidere uoluisset, miramque in moribus ac uerbis prudentiam, humilitatem, religionem ostenderet, dixi illi inter alia conloquens: “Obsecro, sancte frater, qui ad coronam te uitae, quae terminum nesciat, tendere credis, quid contrario tuae fidei habitu terminatam in capite coronae imaginem portas? et si beati Petri consortium quaeris, cur eius, quem ille anathematizauit, tonsurae imaginem imitaris? et non potius eius, cum quo in aeternum beatus uiuere cupis, etiam nunc habitum te, quantum potes, diligere monstras?” Respondit ille: “Scias pro certo, frater mi dilecte, quia etsi Simonis tonsuram ex consuetudine patria habeam, simoniacam tamen perfidiam tota mente detestor ac respuo; beatissimi autem apostolorum principis, quantum mea paruitas sufficit, uestigia sequi desidero.”

At ego: “Credo,” inquam, “uere, quod ita sit; sed tamen indicio fit, quod ea, quae apostoli Petri sunt, in abdito cordis amplectimini, si quae eius esse nostis, etiam in facie tenetis. Namque prudentiam tuam facillime diiudicare reor, quod aptius multo sit, eius, quem corde toto abominaris, cuiusque horrendam faciem uidere refugis, habitum uultus a tuo uultu Deo iam dicato separare; et econtra eius, quem apud Deum habere patronum quaeris, sicut facta uel monita cupis sequi, sic etiam morem habitus te imitari condeceat.”

‘Haec tunc Adamnano dixi, qui quidem quantum conspectis ecclesiarum nostrarum statutis profecisset, probauit, cum reuersus ad Scottiam, multas postea gentis eiusdem turbas ad catholicam temporis paschalis obseruantiam sua praedicatione correxit; tametsi eos, qui in Hii insula morabantur, monachos, quibusque speciali rectoris iure praeerat, necdum ad uiam statuti melioris reducere ualebat. Tonsuram quoque, si tantum sibi auctoritatis subesset, emendare meminisset.

‘Sed et tuam nunc prudentiam, rex, admoneo, ut ea, quae unitati catholicae et apostolicae ecclesiae concinnant, una cum gente, cui te Rex regum et Dominus dominorum praefecit, in omnibus seruare contendas. Sic enim fit, ut post acceptam temporalis regni potentiam ipse beatissimus apostolorum princeps caelestis quoque regni tibi tuisque cum ceteris electis libens pandat introitum. Gratia te Regis aeterni longiori tempore regnantem ad nostram omnium pacem custodiat incolumem, dilectissime in Christo fili.’

Haec epistula cum praesente rege Naitono multisque uiris doctioribus esset lecta, ac diligenter ab his, qui intellegere poterant, in linguam eius propriam interpretata, multum de eius exhortatione gauisus esse perhibetur; ita ut exurgens de medio optimatum suorum consessu, genua flecteret in terram, Deo gratias agens, quod tale munusculum de terra Anglorum mereretur accipere. ‘Et quidem et antea noui,’ inquit, ‘quia haec erat uera paschae celebratio, sed in tantum modo rationem huius temporis obseruandi cognosco, ut parum mihi omnimodis uidear de his antea intellexisse. Unde palam

profiteor uobisque, qui adsidetis, praesentibus protestor, quia hoc obseruare tempus paschae cum uniuersa mea gente perpetuo uolo; hanc accipere debere tonsuram, quam plenam esse rationis audimus, omnes, qui in meo regno sunt, clericos decerno.’ Nec mora, quae dixerat, regia auctoritate perfecit. Statim namque iussu puplico mittebantur ad transcribendum, discendum, obseruandum, per uniuersas Pictorum prouincias circuli paschae decennouenales, oblitteratis per omnia erroneis LXXX et IIII annorum circulis. Adtondebantur omnes in coronam ministri altaris ac monachi; et quasi nouo se discipulatu beatissimi apostolorum principis Petri subditam, eiusque tutandam patrocínio gens correcta gaudebat.

Chap. XXI.

How the Abbot Ceolfrid sent master-builders to the King of the Picts to build a church, and with them an epistle concerning the Catholic Easter and the Tonsure. [710 a.d.]

At that time, Naiton, King of the Picts, who inhabit the northern parts of Britain, taught by frequent meditation on the ecclesiastical writings, renounced the error whereby he and his nation had been holden till then, touching the observance of Easter, and brought himself and all his people to celebrate the catholic time of our Lord’s Resurrection. To the end that he might bring this to pass with the more ease and greater authority, he sought aid from the English, whom he knew to have long since framed their religion after the example of the holy Roman Apostolic Church. Accordingly, he sent messengers to the venerable Ceolfrid, abbot of the monastery of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, which stands at the mouth of the river Wear, and near the river Tyne, at the place called Ingyrium, which he gloriously governed after Benedict, of whom we have before spoken; desiring, that he would send him a letter of exhortation, by the help of which he might the better confute those that presumed to keep Easter out of the due time; as also concerning the form and manner of tonsure whereby the clergy should be distinguished, notwithstanding that he himself had no small knowledge of these things. He also prayed to have master-builders sent him to build a church of stone in his nation after the Roman manner, promising to dedicate the same in honour of the blessed chief of the Apostles. Moreover, he and all his people, he said, would always follow the custom of the holy Roman Apostolic Church, in so far as men so distant from the speech and nation of the Romans could learn it. The most reverend Abbot Ceolfrid favourably receiving his godly desires and requests, sent the builders he desired, and likewise the following letter:

“To the most excellent lord, and glorious King Naiton, Abbot Ceolfrid, greeting in the Lord. We most readily and willingly endeavour, according to your desire, to make known to you the catholic observance of holy Easter,

according to what we have learned of the Apostolic see, even as you, most devout king, in your godly zeal, have requested of us. For we know, that whensoever the lords of this world labour to learn, and to teach and to guard the truth, it is a gift of God to his Holy Church. For a certain profane writer has most truly said, that the world would be most happy if either kings were philosophers, or philosophers were kings. Now if a man of this world could judge truly of the philosophy of this world, and form a right choice concerning the state of this world, how much more is it to be desired, and most earnestly to be prayed for by such as are citizens of the heavenly country, and strangers and pilgrims in this world, that the more powerful any are in the world the more they may strive to hearken to the commands of Him who is the Supreme Judge, and by their example and authority may teach those that are committed to their charge, to keep the same, together with themselves.

“There are then three rules given in the Sacred Writings, whereby the time of keeping Easter has been appointed for us and may in no wise be changed by any authority of man; two whereof are divinely established in the law of Moses; the third is added in the Gospel by reason of the Passion and Resurrection of our Lord. For the law enjoined, that the Passover should be kept in the first month of the year, and the third week of that month, that is, from the fifteenth day to the one-and-twentieth. It is added, by Apostolic institution, from the Gospel, that we are to wait for the Lord’s day in that third week, and to keep the beginning of the Paschal season on the same. Which threefold rule whosoever shall rightly observe, will never err in fixing the Paschal feast. But if you desire to be more plainly and fully informed in all these particulars, it is written in Exodus, where the people of Israel, being about to be delivered out of Egypt, are commanded to keep the first Passover, that the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying, ‘This month shall be unto you the beginning of months; it shall be the first month of the year to you. Speak ye unto all the congregation of Israel, saying, In the tenth day of this month they shall take to them every man a lamb, according to the house of their fathers, a lamb for an house.’ And a little after, ‘And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month; and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening.’ By which words it most plainly appears, that in the Paschal observance, though mention is made of the fourteenth day, yet it is not commanded that the Passover be kept on that day; but on the evening of the fourteenth day, that is, when the fifteenth moon, which is the beginning of the third week, appears in the sky, it is commanded that the lamb be killed; and that it was the night of the fifteenth moon, when the Egyptians were smitten and Israel was redeemed from long captivity. He says, ‘Seven days shall ye eat unleavened bread.’ By which words all the third week of that same first month is appointed to be a solemn feast. But lest we should think that those same seven days were to be reckoned from the fourteenth to the twentieth, He forthwith adds, ‘Even the first day ye shall put

away leaven out of your houses; for whosoever eateth leavened bread, from the first day until the seventh day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel;' and so on, till he says, 'For in this selfsame day I will bring your army out of the land of Egypt.'

"Thus he calls that the first day of unleavened bread, in which he was to bring their army out of Egypt. Now it is evident, that they were not brought out of Egypt on the fourteenth day, in the evening whereof the lamb was killed, and which is properly called the Passover or Phase, but on the fifteenth day, as is most plainly written in the book of Numbers: 'and they departed from Rameses on the fifteenth day of the first month, on the morrow after the Passover the Israelites went out with an high hand.' Thus the seven days of unleavened bread, on the first whereof the people of the Lord were brought out of Egypt, are to be reckoned from the beginning of the third week, as has been said, that is, from the fifteenth day of the first month, till the end of the one-and-twentieth of the same month. But the fourteenth day is named apart from this number, by the title of the Passover, as is plainly shown by that which follows in Exodus: where, after it is said, 'For in this self-same day I will bring your army out of the land of Egypt;' it is forthwith added, 'And ye shall observe this day in your generations by an ordinance for ever. In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, ye shall eat unleavened bread, until the one-and-twentieth day of the month at even. Seven days shall there be no leaven found in your houses.' Now, who is there that does not perceive, that there are not only seven days, but rather eight, from the fourteenth to the one-and-twentieth, if the fourteenth be also reckoned in the number? But if, as appears by diligent study of the truth of the Scriptures, we reckon from the evening of the fourteenth day to the evening of the one-and-twentieth, we shall certainly find, that, while the Paschal feast begins on the evening of the fourteenth day, yet the whole sacred solemnity contains no more than only seven nights and as many days. Wherefore the rule which we laid down is proved to be true, when we said that the Paschal season is to be celebrated in the first month of the year, and the third week of the same. For it is in truth the third week, because it begins on the evening of the fourteenth day, and ends on the evening of the one-and-twentieth.

"But since Christ our Passover is sacrificed, and has made the Lord's day, which among the ancients was called the first day of the week, a solemn day to us for the joy of His Resurrection, the Apostolic tradition has included it in the Paschal festival; yet has decreed that the time of the legal Passover be in no wise anticipated or diminished; but rather ordains, that according to the precept of the law, that same first month of the year, and the fourteenth day of the same, and the evening thereof be awaited. And when this day should chance to fall on a Saturday, every man should take to him a lamb, according to the house of his fathers, a lamb for an house, and he should kill it in the evening, that is, that all the Churches throughout the world, making one

Catholic Church, should provide Bread and Wine for the Mystery of the Flesh and Blood of the spotless Lamb ‘that hath taken away the sins of the world;’ and after a fitting solemn service of lessons and prayers and Paschal ceremonies, they should offer up these to the Lord, in hope of redemption to come. For this is that same night in which the people of Israel were delivered out of Egypt by the blood of the lamb; this is the same in which all the people of God were, by Christ’s Resurrection, set free from eternal death. Then, in the morning, when the Lord’s day dawns, they should celebrate the first day of the Paschal festival; for that is the day on which our Lord made known the glory of His Resurrection to His disciples, to their manifold joy at the merciful revelation. The same is the first day of unleavened bread, concerning which it is plainly written in Leviticus, ‘In the fourteenth day of the first month, at even, is the Lord’s Passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the Lord; seven days ye must eat unleavened bread. In the first day ye shall have an holy convocation.’

“If therefore it could be that the Lord’s day should always happen on the fifteenth day of the first month, that is, on the fifteenth moon, we might always celebrate the Passover at one and the same time with the ancient people of God, though the nature of the mystery be different, as we do it with one and the same faith. But inasmuch as the day of the week does not keep pace exactly with the moon, the Apostolic tradition, which was preached at Rome by the blessed Peter, and confirmed at Alexandria by Mark the Evangelist, his interpreter, appointed that when the first month was come, and in it the evening of the fourteenth day, we should also wait for the Lord’s day, between the fifteenth and the one-and-twentieth day of the same month. For on whichever of those days it shall fall, Easter will be rightly kept on the same; seeing that it is one of those seven days on which the feast of unleavened bread is commanded to be kept. Thus it comes to pass that our Easter never falls either before or after the third week of the first month, but has for its observance either the whole of it, to wit, the seven days of unleavened bread appointed by the law, or at least some of them. For though it comprises but one of them, that is, the seventh, which the Scripture so highly commends, saying, ‘But the seventh day shall be a more holy convocation, ye shall do no servile work therein,’ none can lay it to our charge, that we do not rightly keep Easter Sunday, which we received from the Gospel, in the third week of the first month, as the Law prescribes.

“The catholic reason of this observance being thus explained, the unreasonable error, on the other hand, of those who, without any necessity, presume either to anticipate, or to go beyond the term appointed in the Law, is manifest. For they that think Easter Sunday is to be observed from the fourteenth day of the first month till the twentieth moon, anticipate the time prescribed in the law, without any necessary reason; for when they begin to celebrate the vigil of the holy night from the evening of the thirteenth day, it is

plain that they make that day the beginning of their Easter, whereof they find no mention in the commandment of the Law; and when they avoid celebrating our Lord's Easter on the one-and-twentieth day of the month, it is surely manifest that they wholly exclude that day from their solemnity, which the Law many times commends to be observed as a greater festival than the rest; and thus, perverting the proper order, they sometimes keep Easter Day entirely in the second week, and never place it on the seventh day of the third week. And again, they who think that Easter is to be kept from the sixteenth day of the said month till the two-and-twentieth no less erroneously, though on the other side, deviate from the right way of truth, and as it were avoiding shipwreck on Scylla, they fall into the whirlpool of Charybdis to be drowned. For when they teach that Easter is to be begun at the rising of the sixteenth moon of the first month, that is, from the evening of the fifteenth day, it is certain that they altogether exclude from their solemnity the fourteenth day of the same month, which the Law first and chiefly commends; so that they scarce touch the evening of the fifteenth day, on which the people of God were redeemed from Egyptian bondage, and on which our Lord, by His Blood, rescued the world from the darkness of sin, and on which being also buried, He gave us the hope of a blessed rest after death.

“And these men, receiving in themselves the recompense of their error, when they place Easter Sunday on the twenty-second day of the month, openly transgress and do violence to the term of Easter appointed by the Law, seeing that they begin Easter on the evening of that day in which the Law commanded it to be completed and brought to an end; and appoint that to be the first day of Easter, whereof no mention is any where found in the Law, to wit, the first of the fourth week. And both sorts are mistaken, not only in fixing and computing the moon's age, but also sometimes in finding the first month; but this controversy is longer than can be or ought to be contained in this letter. I will only say thus much, that by the vernal equinox, it may always be found, without the chance of an error, which must be the first month of the year, according to the lunar computation, and which the last. But the equinox, according to the opinion of all the Eastern nations, and particularly of the Egyptians, who surpass all other learned men in calculation, falls on the twenty-first day of March, as we also prove by horological observation. Whatsoever moon therefore is at the full before the equinox, being on the fourteenth or fifteenth day, the same belongs to the last month of the foregoing year, and consequently is not meet for the celebration of Easter; but that moon which is full after the equinox, or at the very time of the equinox, belongs to the first month, and on that day, without a doubt, we must understand that the ancients were wont to celebrate the Passover; and that we also ought to keep Easter when the Sunday comes. And that this must be so, there is this cogent reason. It is written in Genesis, ‘And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night.’ Or, as another edition has it, ‘The greater light to begin the day, and the lesser

to begin the night.' As, therefore, the sun, coming forth from the midst of the east, fixed the vernal equinox by his rising, and afterwards the moon at the full, when the sun set in the evening, followed from the midst of the east; so every year the same first lunar month must be observed in the like order, so that its full moon must not be before the equinox; but either on the very day of the equinox, as it was in the beginning, or after it is past. But if the full moon shall happen to be but one day before the time of the equinox, the aforesaid reason proves that such moon is not to be assigned to the first month of the new year, but rather to the last of the preceding, and that it is therefore not meet for the celebration of the Paschal festival.

"Now if it please you likewise to hear the mystical reason in this matter, we are commanded to keep Easter in the first month of the year, which is also called the month of new things, because we ought to celebrate the mysteries of our Lord's Resurrection and our deliverance, with the spirit of our minds renewed to the love of heavenly things. We are commanded to keep it in the third week of the same month, because Christ Himself, who had been promised before the Law, and under the Law, came with grace, in the third age of the world, to be sacrificed as our Passover; and because rising from the dead the third day after the offering of His Passion, He wished this to be called the Lord's day, and the Paschal feast of His Resurrection to be yearly celebrated on the same; because, also, we do then only truly celebrate His solemn festival, if we endeavour with Him to keep the Passover, that is, the passing from this world to the Father, by faith, hope, and charity. We are commanded to observe the full moon of the Paschal month after the vernal equinox, to the end, that the sun may first make the day longer than the night, and then the moon may show to the world her full orb of light; inasmuch as first 'the Sun of righteousness, with healing in His wings,' that is, our Lord Jesus, by the triumph of His Resurrection, dispelled all the darkness of death, and so ascending into Heaven, filled His Church, which is often signified by the name of the moon, with the light of inward grace, by sending down upon her His Spirit. Which order of our salvation the prophet had in his mind, when he said 'The sun was exalted and the moon stood in her order.'

"He, therefore, who shall contend that the full Paschal moon can happen before the equinox, disagrees with the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, in the celebration of the greatest mysteries, and agrees with those who trust that they may be saved without the grace of Christ preventing them, and who presume to teach that they might have attained to perfect righteousness, though the true Light had never by death and resurrection vanquished the darkness of the world. Thus, after the rising of the sun at the equinox, and after the full moon of the first month following in her order, that is, after the end of the fourteenth day of the same month, all which we have received by the Law to be observed, we still, as we are taught in the Gospel, wait in the third week for the Lord's day; and so, at length, we celebrate the offering of our Easter

solemnity, to show that we are not, with the ancients, doing honour to the casting off of the yoke of Egyptian bondage; but that, with devout faith and love, we worship the Redemption of the whole world, which having been prefigured in the deliverance of the ancient people of God, was fulfilled in Christ's Resurrection, and that we may signify that we rejoice in the sure and certain hope of our own resurrection, which we believe will likewise happen on the Lord's day.

"Now this computation of Easter, which we set forth to you to be followed, is contained in a cycle of nineteen years, which began long since to be observed in the Church, to wit, even in the time of the Apostles, especially at Rome and in Egypt, as has been said above. But by the industry of Eusebius, who took his surname from the blessed martyr Pamphilus, it was reduced to a plainer system; insomuch that what till then used to be enjoined every year throughout all the Churches by the Bishop of Alexandria, might, from that time forward, be most easily known by all men, the occurrence of the fourteenth moon being regularly set forth in its course. This Paschal computation, Theophilus, Bishop of Alexandria, made for the Emperor Theodosius, for a hundred years to come. Cyril also, his successor, comprised a series of ninety-five years in five cycles of nineteen years. After whom, Dionysius Exiguus added as many more, in order, after the same manner, reaching down to our own time. The expiration of these is now drawing near, but there is at the present day so great a number of calculators, that even in our Churches throughout Britain, there are many who, having learned the ancient rules of the Egyptians, can with great ease carry on the Paschal cycles for any length of time, even to five hundred and thirty-two years, if they will; after the expiration of which, all that appertains to the succession of sun and moon, month and week, returns in the same order as before. We therefore forbear to send you these same cycles of the times to come, because, desiring only to be instructed respecting the reason for the Paschal time, you show that you have enough of those catholic cycles concerning Easter.

"But having said thus much briefly and succinctly, as you required, concerning Easter, I also exhort you to take heed that the tonsure, concerning which likewise you desired me to write to you, be in accordance with the use of the Church and the Christian Faith. And we know indeed that the Apostles were not all shorn after the same manner, nor does the Catholic Church now, as it agrees in one faith, hope, and charity towards God, use one and the same form of tonsure throughout the world. Moreover, to look back to former times, to wit, the times of the patriarchs, Job, the pattern of patience, when tribulation came upon him, shaved his head, and thus made it appear that he had used, in time of prosperity, to let his hair grow. But concerning Joseph, who more than other men practised and taught chastity, humility, piety, and the other virtues, we read that he was shorn when he was to be delivered from bondage, by which it appears, that during the time of his bondage, he was in

the prison with unshorn hair. Behold then how each of these men of God differed in the manner of their appearance abroad, though their inward consciences agreed in a like grace of virtue. But though we may be free to confess, that the difference of tonsure is not hurtful to those whose faith is pure towards God, and their charity sincere towards their neighbour, especially since we do not read that there was ever any controversy among the Catholic fathers about the difference of tonsure, as there has been a contention about the diversity in keeping Easter, and in matters of faith; nevertheless, among all the forms of tonsure that are to be found in the Church, or among mankind at large, I think none more meet to be followed and received by us than that which that disciple wore on his head, to whom, after his confession of Himself, our Lord said, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it, and I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of Heaven.' Nor do I think that any is more rightly to be abhorred and detested by all the faithful, than that which that man used, to whom that same Peter, when he would have bought the grace of the Holy Ghost, said, 'Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this word.' Nor do we shave ourselves in the form of a crown only because Peter was so shorn; but because Peter was so shorn in memory of the Passion of our Lord, therefore we also, who desire to be saved by the same Passion, do with him bear the sign of the same Passion on the top of our head, which is the highest part of our body. For as all the Church, because it was made a Church by the death of Him that gave it life, is wont to bear the sign of His Holy Cross on the forehead, to the end, that it may, by the constant protection of His banner, be defended from the assaults of evil spirits, and by the frequent admonition of the same be taught, in like manner, to crucify the flesh with its affections and lusts; so also it behoves those, who having either taken the vows of a monk, or having the degree of a clerk, must needs curb themselves the more strictly by continence, for the Lord's sake, to bear each one of them on his head, by the tonsure, the form of the crown of thorns which He bore on His head in His Passion, that He might bear the thorns and thistles of our sins, that is, that he might bear them away and take them from us; to the end that they may show on their foreheads that they also willingly, and readily, endure all scoffing and reproach for his sake; and that they may signify that they await always 'the crown of eternal life, which God hath promised to them that love him,' and that for the sake of attaining thereto they despise both the evil and the good of this world. But as for the tonsure which Simon Magus is said to have used, who is there of the faithful, I ask you, who does not straightway detest and reject it at the first sight of it, together with his magic? Above the forehead it does seem indeed to resemble a crown; but when you come to look at the neck, you will find the crown cut short which you thought you saw; so that you may perceive that such a use properly belongs not to Christians but to Simoniacs, such as were indeed in this life by

erring men thought worthy of the glory of an everlasting crown; but in that which is to follow this life are not only deprived of all hope of a crown, but are moreover condemned to eternal punishment.

“But do not think that I have said thus much, as though I judged them worthy to be condemned who use this tonsure, if they uphold the catholic unity by their faith and works; nay, I confidently declare, that many of them have been holy men and worthy servants of God. Of which number is Adamnan, the notable abbot and priest of the followers of Columba, who, when sent on a mission by his nation to King Aldfrid, desired to see our monastery, and forasmuch as he showed wonderful wisdom, humility, and piety in his words and behaviour, I said to him among other things, when I talked with him, ‘I beseech you, holy brother, how is it that you, who believe that you are advancing to the crown of life, which knows no end, wear on your head, after a fashion ill-suited to your belief, the likeness of a crown that has an end? And if you seek the fellowship of the blessed Peter, why do you imitate the likeness of the tonsure of him whom St. Peter anathematized? and why do you not rather even now show that you choose with all your heart the fashion of him with whom you desire to live in bliss for ever.’ He answered, ‘Be assured, my dear brother, that though I wear the tonsure of Simon, according to the custom of my country, yet I detest and abhor with all my soul the heresy of Simon; and I desire, as far as lies in my small power, to follow the footsteps of the most blessed chief of the Apostles.’ I replied, ‘I verily believe it; nevertheless it is a token that you embrace in your inmost heart whatever is of Peter the Apostle, if you also observe in outward form that which you know to be his. For I think your wisdom easily discerns that it is much better to estrange from your countenance, already dedicated to God, the fashion of his countenance whom with all your heart you abhor, and of whose hideous face you would shun the sight; and, on the other hand, that it beseems you to imitate the manner of his appearance, whom you seek to have for your advocate before God, even as you desire to follow his actions and his teaching.’

“This I said at that time to Adamnan, who indeed showed how much he had profited by seeing the ordinances of our Churches, when, returning into Scotland, he afterwards by his preaching led great numbers of that nation to the catholic observance of the Paschal time; though he was not yet able to bring back to the way of the better ordinance the monks that lived in the island of Hii over whom he presided with the special authority of a superior. He would also have been mindful to amend the tonsure, if his influence had availed so far.

“But I now also admonish your wisdom, O king, that together with the nation, over which the King of kings, and Lord of lords, has placed you, you strive to observe in all points those things which are in accord with the unity of the Catholic and Apostolic Church; for so it will come to pass, that after

you have held sway in a temporal kingdom, the blessed chief of the Apostles will also willingly open to you and yours with all the elect the entrance into the heavenly kingdom. The grace of the eternal King preserve you in safety, long reigning for the peace of us all, my dearly beloved son in Christ.”

This letter having been read in the presence of King Naiton and many learned men, and carefully interpreted into his own language by those who could understand it, he is said to have much rejoiced at the exhortation thereof; insomuch that, rising from among his nobles that sat about him, he knelt on the ground, giving thanks to God that he had been found worthy to receive such a gift from the land of the English. “And indeed,” he said, “I knew before, that this was the true celebration of Easter, but now I so fully learn the reason for observing this time, that I seem in all points to have known but little before concerning these matters. Therefore I publicly declare and protest to you that are here present, that I will for ever observe this time of Easter, together with all my nation; and I do decree that this tonsure, which we have heard to be reasonable, shall be received by all clerks in my kingdom.” Without delay he accomplished by his royal authority what he had said. For straightway the Paschal cycles of nineteen years were sent by command of the State throughout all the provinces of the Picts to be transcribed, learned, and observed, the erroneous cycles of eighty-four years being everywhere blotted out. All the ministers of the altar and monks were shorn after the fashion of the crown; and the nation thus reformed, rejoiced, as being newly put under the guidance of Peter, the most blessed chief of the Apostles, and committed to his protection.

CHAP. 22

Nec multo post illi quoque, qui insulam Hii incolebant, monachi Scotticae nationis cum his, quae sibi erant subdita, monasteriis ad ritum paschae ac tonsurae canonicum Domino procurante perducti sunt. Siquidem anno ab incarnatione Domini DCCXVI, quo Osredo occiso Coenred gubernacula regni Nordanhymbrorum suscepit, cum uenisset ad eos de Hibernia Deo amabilis, et cum omni honorificentia nominandus pater ac sacerdos, Ecgberct, cuius superius memoriam saepius fecimus, honorifice ab eis et multo cum gaudio susceptus est. Qui quoniam et doctor suauissimus, et eorum, quae agenda docebat, erat exsecutor deuotissimus, libenter auditus ab uniuersis, inmutauit piis ac sedulis exhortationibus inueteratam illam traditionem parentum eorum, de quibus apostolicum illum licet proferre sermonem, quod aemulationem Dei habebant, sed non secundum scientiam; catholicoque illos atque apostolico more celebrationem, ut diximus, praecipuae sollemnitis sub figura coronae perpetis agere perdociuit. Quod mira diuinae constat factum dispensatione pietatis, ut quoniam gens illa, quam nouerat scientiam diuinae cognitionis libenter ac sine inuidia populis Anglorum communicare curauit; ipsa quoque postmodum per gentem Anglorum in eis, quae minus habuerat, ad perfectam uiuendi normam perueniret. Sicut econtra Brettones, qui nolebant Anglis eam, quam habebant, fidei Christianae notitiam pandere, credentibus iam populis Anglorum, et in regula fidei catholicae per omnia instructis, ipsi adhuc inueterati et claudicantes a semitis suis, et capita sine corona praetendunt, et sollemnia Christi sine ecclesiae Christi societate uenerantur.

Susceperunt autem Hiienses monachi docente Ecgbercto ritus uiuendi catholicos sub abbate Duunchado, post annos circiter LXXX, ex quo ad praedicationem gentis Anglorum Aidanum miserant antistitem. Mansit autem uir Domini Ecgberct annos XIII in praefata insula, quam ipse uelut noua quadam relucente gratia ecclesiasticae societatis et pacis Christo consecrauerat; annoque dominicae incarnationis DCCXXVIII, quo pascha dominicum octauo Kalendarum Maiarum die celebrabatur, cum missarum sollemnia in memoriam eiusdem dominicae resurrectionis celebrasset, eodem die et ipse migravit ad Dominum, ac gaudium summae festiuitatis, quod cum fratribus, quos ad unitatis gratiam conuerterat, inchoauit, cum Domino et apostolis, ceterisque caeli ciuibus conpleuit, immo id ipsum celebrare sine fine non desinit. Mira autem diuinae dispensatio prouisionis erat, quod uenerabilis uir non solum in pascha transiuit de hoc mundo ad Patrem; uerum etiam cum eo die pascha celebraretur, quo numquam prius in eis locis celebrari solebat. Gaudebant ergo fratres de agnitione certa et catholica temporis paschalis; laetabantur de patrocinio pergentis ad Dominum patris, per quem fuerant correcti;

gratulabatur ille, quod eatenus in carne seruatus est, donec illum in pascha diem suos auditores, quem semper antea uitabant, suscipere ac secum agere

uideret. Sicque certus de illorum correctione reuerentissimus pater exsultauit, ut uideret diem Domini; uidit et gauisus est.

Chap. XXII.

How the monks of Hii, and the monasteries subject to them, began to celebrate the canonical Easter at the preaching of Egbert. [716 a.d.]

Not long after, those monks also of the Scottish nation, who lived in the isle of Hii, with the other monasteries that were subject to them, were by the Lord's doing brought to the canonical observance with regard to Easter, and the tonsure. For in the year of our Lord 716, when Osred was slain, and Coenred took upon him the government of the kingdom of the Northumbrians, the father and priest, Egbert, beloved of God, and worthy to be named with all honour, whom we have before often mentioned, came to them from Ireland, and was honourably and joyfully received. Being a most gracious teacher, and most devout in practising those things which he taught, and being willingly heard by all, by his pious and diligent exhortations, he converted them from that deep-rooted tradition of their fathers, of whom may be said those words of the Apostle, "That they had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." He taught them to celebrate the principal solemnity after the catholic and apostolic manner, as has been said, wearing on their heads the figure of an unending crown. It is manifest that this came to pass by a wonderful dispensation of the Divine goodness; to the end, that the same nation which had willingly, and without grudging, taken heed to impart to the English people that learning which it had in the knowledge of God, should afterwards, by means of the English nation, be brought, in those things which it had not, to a perfect rule of life. Even as, contrarywise, the Britons, who would not reveal to the English the knowledge which they had of the Christian faith, now, when the English people believe, and are in all points instructed in the rule of the Catholic faith, still persist in their errors, halting and turned aside from the true path, expose their heads without a crown, and keep the Feast of Christ apart from the fellowship of the Church of Christ.

The monks of Hii, at the teaching of Egbert, adopted the catholic manner of conversation, under Abbot Dunchad, about eighty years after they had sent Bishop Aidan to preach to the English nation. The man of God, Egbert, remained thirteen years in the aforesaid island, which he had thus consecrated to Christ, as it were, by a new ray of the grace of fellowship and peace in the Church; and in the year of our Lord 729, in which Easter was celebrated on the 24th of April, when he had celebrated the solemnity of the Mass, in memory of the Resurrection of our Lord, that same day he departed to the Lord and thus finished, or rather never ceases endlessly to celebrate, with our Lord, and the Apostles, and the other citizens of heaven, the joy of that greatest festival, which he had begun with the brethren, whom he had

converted to the grace of unity. And it was a wonderful dispensation of the Divine Providence, that the venerable man passed from this world to the Father, not only at Easter, but also when Easter was celebrated on that day, on which it had never been wont to be celebrated in those parts. The brethren rejoiced in the sure and catholic knowledge of the time of Easter, and were glad in that their father, by whom they had been brought into the right way, passing hence to the Lord should plead for them. He also gave thanks that he had so long continued in the flesh, till he saw his hearers accept and keep with him as Easter that day which they had ever before avoided. Thus the most reverend father being assured of their amendment, rejoiced to see the day of the Lord, and he saw it and was glad.

CHAP. 23

Anno dominicae incarnationis DCCXXV, qui erat annus septimus Osric regis Nordanhymbrorum, qui Coenredo successerat, Uictred filius Ecgberecti, rex Cantuariorum, defunctus est nono die Kalendarum Maiarum; et regni, quod per XXXIII semis annos tenebat, filios tres, Aedilberctum, Eadberctum, et Alricum, reliquit heredes.

Anno post quem proximo Tobias Hrofensis ecclesiae praesul defunctus est, uir, ut supra meminimus, doctissimus. Erat enim discipulus beatae memoriae magistrorum Theodori archiepiscopi, et abbatis Hadriani; unde, ut dictum est, cum eruditione litterarum uel ecclesiasticarum uel generalium, ita Grecam quoque cum Latina didicit linguam, ut tam notas ac familiares sibi eas quam natiuitatis suae loquellam haberet. Sepultus uero est in porticu sancti Pauli apostoli, quam intro ecclesiam sancti Andreae sibi ipse in locum sepulchri fecerat. Post quem episcopatus officium Alduulf, Berctualdo archiepiscopo consecrante, suscepit.

Anno dominicae incarnationis DCCXXVIII apparuerunt cometae duae circa solem, multum intuentibus terrorem incutientes. Una quippe solem praecedebat, mane orientem; altera uespere sequebatur occidentem, quasi orienti simul et occidenti dirae cladis praesagae;

uel certe una diei, altera noctis praecurrebat exortum, ut utroque tempore mala mortalibus imminere signarent. Portabant autem facem ignis contra Aquilonem, quasi ad accendendum adclinem; apparebantque mense Ianuario, et duabus ferme septimanis permanebant. Quo tempore grauissima Sarracenorum lues Gallias misera caede uastabat, et ipsi non multo post in eadem prouincia dignas suae perfidiae poenas luebant. Quo anno sanctus uir Domini Ecgberct, ut supra commemorauimus, ipso die paschae migravit ad Dominum; et mox, peracto pascha, hoc est VIIa Iduum Maiarum die, Osric rex Nordanhymbrorum uita decessit, cum ipse regni, quod XI annis gubernabat, successorem fore Ceoluulfum decreuisset, fratrem illius, qui ante se regnauerat, Coenredi regis, cuius regni et principia et processus tot ac tantis redundauere rerum aduersantium motibus, ut, quid de his scribi debeat, quemue habitura sint finem singula, necdum sciri ualeat.

Anno dominicae incarnationis DCCXXXI, Berctuald archiepiscopus longa consumtus aetate defunctus est die Iduum Ianuariarum; qui sedit annos XXXVII, menses VI, dies XIII; pro quo anno eodem factus est archiepiscopus, uocabulo Tatuini, de prouincia Merciorum, cum fuisset presbyter in monasterio, quod uocatur Briudun. Consecratus est autem in Doruuerni ciuitate a uiris uenerabilibus Danihele Uentano, et Ingualdo Lundoniensi, et Alduino Lyccitfeldensi, et Alduulfo Hrofensi antistitibus, die decima Iunii mensis, dominica;

uir religione et prudentia insignis, sacris quoque litteris nobiliter instructus.

Itaque in praesenti ecclesiis Cantuariorum Tatuini et Alduulf episcopi praesunt. Porro prouinciae Orientalium Saxonum Inguald episcopus; prouinciae Orientalium Anglorum Aldberct et Hadulac episcopi; prouinciae Occidentalium Saxonum Danihel et Fortheri episcopi; prouinciae Merciorum Alduini episcopus; et eis populis, qui ultra amnem Sabrinam ad occidentem habitant, Ualchstod episcopus; prouinciae Huicciorum Uilfrid episcopus; prouinciae Lindisfarorum Cyniberct episcopus praeest. Episcopatus Uectae insulae ad Danihelem pertinet episcopum Uentae ciuitatis. Prouincia Australium Saxonum iam aliquot annis absque episcopo manens ministerium sibi episcopale ab Occidentalium Saxonum antistite quaerit. Et hae omnes prouinciae ceteraeque australes ad confinium usque Hymbrae fluminis cum suis quaeque regibus Merciorum regi Aedilbaldo subiectae sunt.

At uero prouinciae Nordanhymbrorum, cui rex Ceoluulf praeest, IIII nunc episcopi praesulatum tenent; Uilfrid in Eburacensi ecclesia, Ediluald in Lindisfaronensi, Acca in Hagustaldensi, Pecthelm in ea, quae Candida Casa uocatur, quae nuper, multiplicatis fidelium plebibus, in sedem pontificatus addita ipsum primum habet antistitem.

Pictorum quoque natio tempore hoc et foedus pacis cum gente habet Anglorum, et catholicae pacis ac ueritatis cum uniuersali ecclesia particeps existere gaudet. Scotti, qui Britanniam incolunt, suis contenti finibus nil contra gentem Anglorum insidiarum moliuntur aut fraudium. Brettones, quamuis et maxima ex parte domestico sibi odio gentem Anglorum, et totius catholicae ecclesiae statum pascha minus recto, moribusque improbis inpugnent; tamen et diuina sibi et humana prorsus resistente uirtute, in neutro cupitum possunt obtinere propositum; quippe qui quamuis ex parte sui sint iuris, nonnulla tamen ex parte Anglorum sunt seruitio mancipati.

Qua adridente pace ac serenitate temporum, plures in gente Nordanhymbrorum, tam nobiles, quam priuati, se suosque liberos, depositis armis, satagunt magis, accepta tonsura, monasterialibus adscribere uotis, quam bellicis exercere studiis. Quae res quem sit habitura finem, posterior aetas uidebit.

Hic est inpraesentiarum uniuersae status Britanniae, anno aduentus Anglorum in Britanniam circiter ducentesimo octogesimo quinto, dominicae autem incarnationis anno DCCXXXI; in cuius regno perpetuo exsultet terra, et congratulante in fide eius Britannia, laetentur insulae multae, et confiteantur memoriae sanctitatis eius.

Chap. XXIII.

Of the present state of the English nation, or of all Britain. [725-731 a.d.]

In the year of our Lord 725, being the seventh year of Osric, king of the

Northumbrians, who had succeeded Coenred, Wictred, the son of Egbert, king of Kent, died on the 23rd of April, and left his three sons, Ethelbert, Eadbert, and Alric, heirs of that kingdom, which he had governed thirty-four years and a half. The next year Tobias, bishop of the church of Rochester, died, a most learned man, as has been said before; for he was disciple to those masters of blessed memory, Theodore, the archbishop, and Abbot Hadrian, wherefore, as has been said, besides having a great knowledge of letters both ecclesiastical and general, he learned both the Greek and Latin tongues to such perfection, that they were as well known and familiar to him as his native language. He was buried in the chapel of St. Paul the Apostle, which he had built within the church of St. Andrew for his own place of burial. After him Aldwulf took upon him the office of bishop, having been consecrated by Archbishop Bertwald.

In the year of our Lord 729, two comets appeared about the sun, to the great terror of the beholders. One of them went before the sun in the morning at his rising, the other followed him when he set in the evening, as it were presaging dire disaster to both east and west; or without doubt one was the forerunner of the day, and the other of the night, to signify that mortals were threatened with calamities at both times. They carried their flaming brands towards the north, as it were ready to kindle a conflagration. They appeared in January, and continued nearly a fortnight. At which time a grievous blight fell upon Gaul, in that it was laid waste by the Saracens with cruel bloodshed; but not long after in that country they received the due reward of their unbelief. In that year the holy man of God, Egbert, departed to the Lord, as has been said above, on Easter day; and immediately after Easter, that is, on the 9th of May, Osric, king of the Northumbrians, departed this life, after he had reigned eleven years, and appointed Ceolwulf, brother to Coenred, who had reigned before him, his successor; the beginning and progress of whose reign have been so filled with many and great commotions and conflicts, that it cannot yet be known what is to be said concerning them, or what end they will have.

In the year of our Lord 731, Archbishop Bertwald died of old age, on the 13th of January, having held his see thirty-seven years, six months and fourteen days. In his stead, the same year, Tatwine, of the province of the Mercians, was made archbishop, having been a priest in the monastery called Briudun. He was consecrated in the city of Canterbury by the venerable men, Daniel, bishop of Winchester, Ingwald of London, Aldwin of Lichfield, and Aldwulf of Rochester, on Sunday, the 10th of June, being a man renowned for piety and wisdom, and of notable learning in Holy Scripture.

Thus at the present time, the bishops Tatwine and Aldwulf preside in the churches of Kent; Ingwald is bishop in the province of the East Saxons. In the province of the East Angles, the bishops are Aldbert and Hadulac; in the province of the West Saxons, Daniel and Forthere; in the province of the Mercians, Aldwin. Among those peoples who dwell beyond the river Severn

to the westward, Walhstod is bishop; in the province of the Hwiccas, Wilfrid; in the province of Lindsey, Bishop Cynibert presides; the bishopric of the Isle of Wight belongs to Daniel, bishop of the city of Winchester. The province of the South Saxons, having now continued some years without a bishop, receives episcopal ministrations from the prelate of the West Saxons. All these provinces, and the other southern provinces, as far as the boundary formed by the river Humber, with their several kings, are subject to King Ethelbald.

But in the province of the Northumbrians, where King Ceolwulf reigns, four bishops now preside; Wilfrid in the church of York, Ethelwald in that of Lindisfarne, Acca in that of Hagustald, Pecthelm in that which is called the White House, which, as the number of the faithful has increased, has lately become an episcopal see, and has him for its first prelate. The Pictish people also at this time are at peace with the English nation, and rejoice in having their part in Catholic peace and truth with the universal Church. The Scots that inhabit Britain, content with their own territories, devise no plots nor hostilities against the English nation. The Britons, though they, for the most part, as a nation hate and oppose the English nation, and wrongfully, and from wicked lewdness, set themselves against the appointed Easter of the whole Catholic Church; yet, inasmuch as both Divine and human power withstand them, they can in neither purpose prevail as they desire; for though in part they are their own masters, yet part of them are brought under subjection to the English. In these favourable times of peace and calm, many of the Northumbrians, as well of the nobility as private persons, laying aside their weapons, and receiving the tonsure, desire rather both for themselves and their children to take upon them monastic vows, than to practise the pursuit of war. What will be the end hereof, the next age will see. This is for the present the state of all Britain; about two hundred and eighty-five years after the coming of the English into Britain, and in the 731st year of our Lord, in Whose kingdom that shall have no end let the earth rejoice; and Britain being one with them in the joy of His faith, let the multitude of isles be glad, and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness.

CHAP. 24

Uerum ea, quae temporum distinctione latius digesta sunt, ob memoriam conseruandam breuiter recapitulari placuit.

Anno igitur ante incarnationem dominicam sexagesimo Gaius Iulius Caesar primus Romanorum Britannias bello pulsauit, et uicit, nec tamen ibi regnum potuit obtinere.

Anno ab incarnatione Domini XLVI, Claudius secundus Romanorum Britannias adiens, plurimam insulae partem in deditionem recepit, et Orcadas quoque insulas Romano adiecit imperio.

Anno incarnationis dominicae CLXVII, Eleuther Romae praesul factus XV annos ecclesiam gloriosissime rexit, cui litteras rex Britanniae Lucius mittens, ut Christianus efficeretur, petiit et inpetrauit.

Anno ab incarnatione Domini CLXXXVIII, Seuerus imperator factus XVII annis regnauit, qui Britanniam uallo a mari usque ad mare praecinxit.

Anno CCCLXXXI, Maximus in Britannia creatus imperator, in Galliam transiit, et Gratianum interfecit.

Anno CCCCVIII, Roma a Gothis fracta, ex quo tempore Romani in Britannia regnare cessarunt.

Anno CCCCLXXX, Palladius ad Scottos in Christum credentes a Caelestino papa primus mittitur episcopus.

Anno CCCCLXVIII, Marcianus cum Ualentiano imperium suscipiens, VII annis tenuit, quorum tempore Angli a Brettonibus accersiti Britanniam adierunt.

Anno DXXXVIII, eclipsis solis facta est XIII. Kalendas Martias, ab hora prima usque ad tertiam.

Anno DXL, eclipsis solis facta XII. Kalendas Iulias, et apparuerunt stellae pene hora dimidia ab hora diei tertia.

Anno DXLVII, Ida regnare coepit, a quo regalis Nordanhymbrorum prosapia originem tenet, et XII annis in regno permansit.

Anno DLXV, Columba presbyter de Scottia uenit Britanniam, ad docendos Pictos, et in insula Hii monasterium fecit.

Anno DXCVI, Gregorius papa misit Britanniam Augustinum cum monachis, qui uerbum Dei genti Anglorum euangelizarent.

Anno DXCVII, uenere Britanniam praefati doctores, qui fuit annus plus minus CL aduentus Anglorum in Britanniam.

Anno DCI, misit papa Gregorius pallium Britanniam Augustino iam facto episcopo, et plures uerbi ministros, in quibus et Paulinum.

Anno DCIII, pugnatum ad Degsastana.

Anno DCIII, Orientales Saxones fidem Christi percipiunt sub rege Sabercto antistite Mellito.

Anno DCV, Gregorius obiit.

Anno DCXVI, Aedilberct rex Cantuariorum defunctus est.

Anno DCXXV, Paulinus a Iusto archiepiscopo ordinatur genti Nordanhybrorum antistes.

Anno DCXXVI, Eanfled, filia Aeduini regis, baptizata cum XII in sabbato pentecostes.

Anno DCXXVII, Eduini rex baptizatus cum sua gente in pascha.

Anno DCXXXIII, Eduine rege peremto, Paulinus Cantiam rediit.

Anno DCXL, Eadbald rex Cantuariorum obiit.

Anno DCXLII, Osuald rex occisus.

Anno DCXLIII, Paulinus, quondam Eboraci, sed tunc Hrofensis antistes ciuitatis, migravit ad Dominum.

Anno DCLI, Osuini rex occisus, et Aidan episcopus defunctus est.

Anno DCLIII, Middilangli sub principe Peada fidei mysteriis sunt inbuti.

Anno DCLV, Penda periit, et Mercii sunt facti Christiani.

Anno DCLXIII, eclipsis facta; Earconberct rex Cantuariorum defunctus, et Colman cum Scottis ad suos reuersus est; et pestilentia uenit; et Ceadda ac Ulfrid Nordanhybrorum ordinantur episcopi.

Anno DCLXVIII, Theodorus ordinatur episcopus.

Anno DCLXX, Osuiu rex Nordanhybrorum obiit.

Anno DCLXXIII, Ecgberct rex Cantuariorum obiit; et synodus facta est ad Herutforda, praesente Ecgfrido rege, praesidente archiepiscopo Theodoro, utillima, X capitulorum.

Anno DCLXXV, Uulfheri rex Merciorum, postquam XVII annos regnauerat, defunctus, Aedilredo fratri reliquit imperium.

Anno DCLXXVI, Aedilred uastauit Cantiam.

Anno DCLXXVIII, cometa apparuit; Ulfrid episcopus a sede sua pulsus est ab Ecgfrido rege; et pro eo Bosa, Eata, et Eadhaeth consecrati antistites.

Anno DCLXXVIII, alfuini occisus.

Anno DCLXXX, synodus facta in campo Haethfeltha de fide catholica, praesidente archiepiscopo Theodoro; in quo adfuit Iohannes abba Romanus. Quo anno Hild abbatissa in Streanashala obiit.

Anno DCLXXXV, Ecgfrid rex Nordanhybrorum occisus est. Anno

eodem Hlothéri rex Cantuariorum obiit.

Anno DCLXXXVIII, Caeduald rex Occidentalium Saxonum Romam de Brittaniam pergit.

Anno DCXC, Theodorus archiepiscopus obiit.

Anno DCXCVII, Osthryd regina a suis, id est Merciorum, primatibus interempta.

Anno DCXCVIII, Berctred dux regis Nordanhymbrorum a Pictis interfectus.

Anno DCCIII, Aedilred, postquam XXXI annos Merciorum genti praefuit, monachus factus Coenredo regnum dedit.

Anno DCCV, Aldfrid rex Nordanhymbrorum defunctus est.

Anno DCCVIII, Coenred rex Merciorum, postquam V annos regnavit, Romam pergit.

Anno DCCXI, Berctfrid praefectus cum Pictis pugnavit.

Anno DCCXVI, Osred rex Nordanhymbrorum interfectus, et rex Merciorum Ceolred defunctus; et uir Domini Ecgbert Hienses monachos ad catholicum pascha et ecclesiasticam correxit tonsuram.

Anno DCCXXV, Uictred rex Cantuariorum obiit.

Anno DCCXXVIII, cometae apparuerunt, sanctus Ecgbert transiit, Osric mortuus est.

Anno DCCXXXI, Berctuald archiepiscopus obiit. Anno eodem Tatuini consecratus archiepiscopus nonus Doruvernensis ecclesiae, Aedilbaldo rege Merciorum XV. agente annum inperii.

Haec de historia ecclesiastica Britanniarum, et maxime gentis Anglorum, prout uel ex litteris antiquorum, uel ex traditione maiorum, uel ex mea ipse cognitione scire potui, Domino adiuuante digessi Baeda famulus Christi, et presbyter monasterii beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli, quod est ad Uiueraemuda, et Ingyrum.

Qui natus in territorio eiusdem monasterii, cum essem annorum septem, cura propinquorum datus sum educandus reuerentissimo abbati Benedicto, ac deinde Ceolfrido; cunctumque ex eo tempus uitae in eiusdem monasterii habitatione peragens, omnem meditandis scripturis operam dedi; atque inter obseruantiam disciplinae regularis, et cotidianam cantandi in ecclesia curam, semper aut discere, aut docere, aut scribere dulce habui.

Nono decimo autem uitae meae anno diaconatum, tricesimo gradum presbyteratus, utrumque per ministerium reuerentissimi episcopi Iohannis, iubente Ceolfrido abbate, suscepi.

Ex quo tempore accepti presbyteratus usque ad annum aetatis meae LVIII, haec in scripturam sanctam meae meorumque necessitati ex opusculis

uenerabilium patrum breuiter adnotare, siue etiam ad formam sensus et interpretationis eorum superadicere curauit:

‘In principium Genesis, usque ad natiuitatem Isaac et eiectionem Ismahelis, libros III.

De tabernaculo et uasis eius, ac uestibus sacerdotum, libros III.

In primam partem Samuelis, id est usque ad mortem Saulis, libros III.

De aedificatione templi, allegoricae expositionis, sicut et cetera, libros II.

Item, in Regum librum XXX quaestionum.

In Prouerbia Salomonis libros III.

In Cantica canticorum libros VII.

In Isaiam, Danihelem, XII prophetas, et partem Hieremiae, distinctiones capitulorum ex tractatu beati Hieronimi excerptas.

In Ezram et Neemiam libros III.

In Canticum Habacum librum I.

In librum beati patris Tobiae explanationis allegoricae de Christo et ecclesia librum I.

Item, Capitula lectionum in Pentateucum Mosi, Iosue, Iudicum;

In libros Regum et Uerba dierum;

In librum beati patris Iob;

In Parabolas, Ecclesiasten, et Cantica canticorum;

In Isaiam prophetam, Ezram quoque et Neemiam.

In euangelium Marci libros IIII.

In euangelium Lucae libros VI.

Omeliarum euangelii libros II.

In apostolum quaecumque in opusculis sancti Augustini exposita inueni, cuncta per ordinem transscribere curauit.

In Actus apostolorum libros II.

In Epistulas VII catholicas libros singulos.

In Apocalypsin sancti Iohannis libros III.

Item, Capitula lectionum in totum nouum testamentum, excepto euangelio.

Item librum epistularum ad diuersos: quarum de sex aetatibus saeculi una est; de mansionibus filiorum Israel una; una de eo, quod ait Isaias: ‘Et claudentur ibi in carcerem, et post dies multos uisitabantur;’ de ratione bissexti una; de aequinoctio iuxta Anatolium una.

Item de historiis sanctorum: librum uitae et passionis sancti Felicis

confessoris de metrico Paulini opere in prosam transtuli;

librum uitae et passionis sancti Anastasii, male de Greco translatum, et peius a quodam inperito emendatum, prout potui, ad sensum correxi; uitam sancti patris monachi simul et antistitis Cudbercti, et prius heroico metro et postmodum plano sermone, descripsi.

Historiam abbatum monasterii huius, in quo supernae pietati deseruire gaudeo, Benedicti, Ceolfridi, et Huaetbercti in libellis duobus.

Historiam ecclesiasticam nostrae insulae ac gentis in libris V.

Martyrologium de nataliciis sanctorum martyrum diebus; in quo omnes, quos inuenire potui, non solum qua die, uerum etiam quo genere certaminis, uel sub quo iudice mundum uicerint, diligenter adnotare studui.

Librum hymnorum diuerso metro siue rhythmo.

Librum epigrammatum heroico metro, siue elegiaco.

De natura rerum, et de temporibus libros singulos; item de temporibus librum I maiorem.

Librum de orthographia, alfabeti ordine distinctum.

Item librum de metrica arte, et huic adiectum alium de schematibus siue tropis libellum, hoc est de figuris modisque locutionum, quibus scriptura sancta contexta est.’

Teque deprecor, bone Iesu, ut cui propitius donasti uerba tuae scientiae dulciter haurire, dones etiam benignus aliquando ad te fontem omnis sapientiae paruenire, et parere semper ante faciem tuam

Chap. XXIV.

Chronological recapitulation of the whole work: also concerning the author himself.

I have thought fit briefly to sum up those things which have been related at length under their particular dates, that they may be the better kept in memory.

In the sixtieth year before the Incarnation of our Lord, Caius Julius Cæsar, first of the Romans invaded Britain, and was victorious, yet could not maintain the supreme power there. [I, 2.]

In the year of our Lord, 46, Claudius, being the second of the Romans who came to Britain, received the surrender of a great part of the island, and added the Orkney islands to the Roman empire. [I, 3.]

In the year of our Lord 167, Eleuther, being made bishop at Rome, governed the Church most gloriously fifteen years. To whom Lucius, king of Britain, sent a letter, asking to be made a Christian, and succeeded in

obtaining his request. [I, 4.]

In the year of our Lord 189, Severus, being made emperor, reigned seventeen years; he fortified Britain with a rampart from sea to sea. [I, 5.]

In the year 381, Maximus, being made emperor in Britain, crossed over into Gaul, and slew Gratian. [I, 9.]

In the year 409, Rome was overthrown by the Goths, from which time the Romans ceased to rule in Britain. [I, 11.]

In the year 430, Palladius was sent by Pope Celestine to the Scots that believed in Christ to be their first bishop. [I, 13.]

In the year 449, Marcian being made emperor with Valentinian, reigned seven years; in whose time the English, being called in by the Britons, came into Britain. [I, 15.]

In the year 538, an eclipse of the sun came to pass on the 16th of February, from the first hour until the third.

In the year 540, an eclipse of the sun came to pass on the 20th of June, and the stars appeared during almost half an hour after the third hour of the day.

In the year 547, Ida began to reign; he was the founder of the royal family of the Northumbrians, and he reigned twelve years.

In the year 565, the priest, Columba, came out of Scotland, into Britain, to teach the Picts, and he built a monastery in the isle of Hii. [III, 4.]

In the year 596, Pope Gregory sent Augustine with monks into Britain, to preach the good tidings of the Word of God to the English nation. [I, 23.]

In the year 597, the aforesaid teachers arrived in Britain; being about the 150th year from the coming of the English into Britain. [I, 25.]

In the year 601, Pope Gregory sent the pall into Britain to Augustine, who was already made bishop; he sent also several ministers of the Word, among whom was Paulinus. [I, 29.]

In the year 603, a battle was fought at Degsastan. [I, 34.]

In the year 604, the East Saxons received the faith of Christ, under King Sabert, Mellitus being bishop. [II, 3.]

In the year 605, Gregory died. [II, 1.]

In the year 616, Ethelbert, king of Kent died. [II, 5.]

In the year 625, Paulinus was ordained bishop of the Northumbrians by Archbishop Justus. [II, 9.]

In the year 626, Eanfled, daughter of King Edwin, was baptized with twelve others, on the eve of Whitsunday. [*Ib.*]

In the year 627, King Edwin was baptized, with his nation, at Easter. [II, 14.]

In the year 633, King Edwin being killed, Paulinus returned to Kent. [II, 20.]

In the year 640, Eadbald, king of Kent, died. [III, 8.]

In the year 642, King Oswald was slain. [III, 9.]

In the year 644, Paulinus, formerly bishop of York, but then of the city of Rochester, departed to the Lord. [III, 14.]

In the year 651, King Oswin was killed, and Bishop Aidan died. [*Ibid.*]

In the year 653, the Middle Angles, under their prince, Penda, were admitted to the mysteries of the faith. [III, 21.]

In the year 655, Penda was slain, and the Mercians became Christians. [III, 24.]

In the year 664, an eclipse came to pass; Earconbert, king of Kent, died; and Colman with the Scots returned to his people; a pestilence arose; Ceadda and Wilfrid were ordained bishops of the Northumbrians. [III, 26-28, IV, 1.]

In the year 668, Theodore was ordained bishop. [IV, 1.]

In the year 670, Oswy, king of the Northumbrians, died. [IV, 5.]

In the year 673, Egbert, king of Kent, died; and a synod was held at Hertford, in the presence of King Egfrid, Archbishop Theodore presiding: the synod was of great profit, and its decrees are contained in ten articles. [*Ibid.*]

In the year 675, Wulfhere, king of the Mercians, when he had reigned seventeen years, died and left the government to his brother Ethelred.

In the year 676, Ethelred ravaged Kent. [IV, 12.]

In the year 678, a comet appeared; Bishop Wilfrid was driven from his see by King Egfrid; and Bosa, Eata, and Eadhaed were consecrated bishops in his stead. [*Ibid.*; V, 19.]

In the year 679, Aelfwine was killed. [IV, 21.]

In the year 680, a synod was held in the plain of Haethfelth, concerning the Catholic faith, Archbishop Theodore presiding; John, the Roman abbot, was also present. The same year also the Abbess Hilda died at Streanaeshalch. [IV, 17, 18, 23.]

In the year 685, Egfrid, king of the Northumbrians, was slain. The same year Hlothere, king of Kent, died. [IV, 26.]

In the year 688, Caedwald, king of the West Saxons, went to Rome from Britain. [V, 7.]

In the year 690, Archbishop Theodore died. [V, 8.]

In the year 697, Queen Osthryth was murdered by her own nobles, to wit, the nobles of the Mercians.

In the year 698, Berctred, an ealdorman of the king of the Northumbrians, was slain by the Picts.

In the year 704, Ethelred, after he had reigned thirty-one years over the nation of the Mercians, became a monk, and gave up the kingdom to Coenred. [V, 19.]

In the year 705, Aldfrid, king of the Northumbrians, died. [V, 18.]

In the year 709, Coenred, king of the Mercians, having reigned five years, went to Rome. [V, 19.]

In the year 711, the commander Bertfrid fought with the Picts.

In the year 716, Osred, king of the Northumbrians, was killed; and Ceolred, king of the Mercians, died; and the man of God, Egbert, brought the monks of Hii to observe the Catholic Easter and the ecclesiastical tonsure. [V, 22.]

In the year 725, Wictred, king of Kent, died. [V, 23.]

In the year 729, comets appeared; the holy Egbert passed away; and Osric died. [*Ibid.*]

In the year 731, Archbishop Bertwald died. [*Ibid.*]

The same year Tatwine was consecrated ninth archbishop of the church of Canterbury, in the fifteenth year of the reign of Ethelbald, king of the Mercians. [*Ibid.*]

Thus much of the Ecclesiastical History of Britain, and more especially of the English nation, as far as I could learn either from the writings of the ancients, or the tradition of our forefathers, or of my own knowledge, with the help of the Lord, I, Bede, the servant of Christ, and priest of the monastery of the blessed Apostles, Peter and Paul, which is at Wearmouth and Jarrow, have set forth. Having been born in the territory of that same monastery, I was given, by the care of kinsmen, at seven years of age, to be educated by the most reverend Abbot Benedict, and afterwards by Ceolfrid, and spending all the remaining time of my life a dweller in that monastery, I wholly applied myself to the study of Scripture; and amidst the observance of monastic rule, and the daily charge of singing in the church, I always took delight in learning, or teaching, or writing. In the nineteenth year of my age, I received deacon's orders; in the thirtieth, those of the priesthood, both of them by the ministry of the most reverend Bishop John, and at the bidding of the Abbot Ceolfrid. From the time when I received priest's orders, till the fifty-ninth year of my age, I have made it my business, for my own needs and those of my brethren, to compile out of the works of the venerable Fathers, the following brief notes on the Holy Scriptures, and also to make some additions after the manner of the meaning and interpretation given by them:

On the Beginning of Genesis, to the birth of Isaac and the casting out of

Ishmael, four books.

Concerning the Tabernacle and its Vessels, and of the Vestments of the Priests, three books.

On the first part of Samuel, to the Death of Saul, three books.

Concerning the Building of the Temple, of Allegorical Exposition, and other matters, two books.

Likewise on the Book of Kings, thirty Questions.

On the Proverbs of Solomon, three books.

On the Song of Songs, seven books.

On Isaiah, Daniel, the twelve Prophets, and Part of Jeremiah, Divisions of Chapters, collected from the Treatise of the blessed Jerome.

On Ezra and Nehemiah, three books.

On the song of Habakkuk, one book.

On the Book of the blessed Father Tobias, one Book of Allegorical Explanation concerning Christ and the Church.

Also, Chapters of Readings on the Pentateuch of Moses, Joshua, and Judges;

On the Books of Kings and Chronicles;

On the Book of the blessed Father Job;

On the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs;

On the Prophets Isaiah, Ezra, and Nehemiah.

On the Gospel of Mark, four books.

On the Gospel of Luke, six books.

Of Homilies on the Gospel, two books.

On the Apostle, whatsoever I have found in the works of St. Augustine I have taken heed to transcribe in order.

On the Acts of the Apostles, two books.

On the seven Catholic Epistles, a book on each.

On the Revelation of St. John, three books.

Likewise, Chapters of Lessons on all the New Testament, except the Gospel.

Likewise a book of Epistles to divers Persons, of which one is of the Six Ages of the world; one of the Halting-places of the Children of Israel; one on the words of Isaiah, "And they shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited"; one of the Reason of Leap-Year, and one of the Equinox, according to Anatolius.

Likewise concerning the Histories of Saints: I translated the Book of the Life and Passion of St. Felix, Confessor, from the metrical work of Paulinus, into prose; the Book of the Life and Passion of St. Anastasius, which was ill translated from the Greek, and worse amended by some ignorant person, I have corrected as to the sense as far as I could; I have written the Life of the Holy Father Cuthbert, who was both monk and bishop, first in heroic verse, and afterwards in prose.

The History of the Abbots of this monastery, in which I rejoice to serve the Divine Goodness, to wit, Benedict, Ceolfrid, and Huaetbert, in two books.

The Ecclesiastical History of our Island and Nation, in five books.

The Martyrology of the Festivals of the Holy Martyrs, in which I have carefully endeavoured to set down all whom I could find, and not only on what day, but also by what sort of combat, and under what judge they overcame the world.

A Book of Hymns in divers sorts of metre, or rhythm.

A Book of Epigrams in heroic or elegiac verse.

Of the Nature of Things, and of the Times, one book of each; likewise, of the Times, one larger book.

A book of Orthography arranged in Alphabetical Order.

Likewise a Book of the Art of Poetry, and to it I have added another little Book of Figures of Speech or Tropes; that is, of the Figures and Modes of Speech in which the Holy Scriptures are written.

And I beseech Thee, good Jesus, that to whom Thou hast graciously granted sweetly to drink in the words of Thy knowledge, Thou wilt also vouchsafe in Thy loving-kindness that he may one day come to Thee, the Fountain of all wisdom, and appear for ever before Thy face.

BAEDAE CONTINUATIO — CONTINUATION

Anno DCCXXXI, Ceoluulf rex captus, et adtonsus, et remissus in regnum; Acca episcopus de sua sede fugatus. Anno DCCXXXII, Ecgberct pro Uilfrido Eboraci episcopus factus.

Cynibertus episcopus Lindisfarorum obiit.

Anno ab incarnatione Domini DCCXXXIII Tatuini archiepiscopus, accepto ab apostolica auctoritate pallio, ordinavit Aluic et Sigfridum episcopos.

Anno DCCXXXIII, eclipsis facta est solis XVIII, Kal. Sep. circa horam diei tertiam, ita ut pene totus orbis solis quasi nigerrimo et horrendo scuto uideretur esse coopertus.

Anno DCCXXXIII, luna sanguineo rubore perfusa, quasi hora integra II. Kal. Febr. circa galli cantum, dehinc nigredine subsequente ad lucem propriam reuersa.

Anno ab incarnatione Christi DCCXXXIII Tatuini episcopus obiit.

Anno DCCXXXV, Nothelmus archiepiscopus ordinatur; et Ecgbertus episcopus, accepto ab apostolica sede pallio, primus post Paulinum in archiepiscopatum confirmatus est; ordinavitque Fruidbertum et Fruiduualdum episcopos, et Baeda presbyter obiit.

Anno DCCXXXVII, nimia siccitas terram fecit infecundam; et Ceoluulfus sua uoluntate adtonsus regnum Eadbercto reliquit.

The Continuation of Bede.

In the year 731 King Ceolwulf was taken prisoner, and tonsured, and sent back to his kingdom; Bishop Acca was driven from his see.

In the year 732, Egbert was made Bishop of York, in the room of Wilfrid.

[Cynibert Bishop of Lindsey died.]

[In the year of our Lord 733, Archbishop Tatwine, having received the pall by Apostolic authority, ordained Alwic and Sigfrid, bishops.]

In the year 733, there was an eclipse of the sun on the 14th day of August about the third hour, in such wise that the whole orb of the sun seemed to be covered with a black and gloomy shield.

In the year 734, the moon, on the 31st of January, about the time of cock-crowing, was, for about a whole hour, coloured blood-red, after which a blackness followed, and she regained her wonted light.

In the year from the Incarnation of Christ, 734, bishop Tatwine died.

In the year 735, Nothelm was ordained archbishop; and bishop Egbert, having received the pall from the Apostolic see, was the first to be established as archbishop after Paulinus, and he ordained Frithbert, and Frithwald bishops; and the priest Bede died.

In the year 737, an excessive drought rendered the land unfruitful; and Ceolwulf, voluntarily receiving the tonsure, left the kingdom to Eadbert.

Anno DCCXXXIX, Edilhartus Occidentalium Saxonum rex obiit; et Nothelmus archiepiscopus.

Anno DCCXL, Cudberctus pro Nothelmo consecratus est.

Aedilbaldus rex Merciorum per impiam fraudem uastabat partem Nordanhymbrorum;

eratque rex eorum Eadberctus occupatus cum suo exercitu contra Pictos. Aedilualdus quoque episcopus obiit, et pro eo Conuulfus ordinatur antistes. Arnuuini et Eadberctus interempti.

Anno DCCXLI, siccitas magna terram occupauit. Carolus rex Francorum obiit; et pro eo filii Caroloman et Pippin regnum acceperunt.

Anno DCCXLV, Uilfrid episcopus et Ingualdus Lundoniae episcopus migrauerunt ad Dominum.

Anno DCCXLVII, Herefridus uir Dei obiit.

Anno DCCL, Cudretus rex Occidentalium Saxonum surrexit contra Aedilbaldum regem et Oengusum. Theudor atque Eanredus obierunt.

Eadberctus campum Cyil cum aliis regionibus suo regno addidit.

Anno DCCLIII. anno regni Eadbercti quinto, [quinto] Idus Ianuarias eclipsis solis facta est. Postea eodem anno et mense, hoc est nono Kalendarum Februariarum, luna eclipsim pertulit, horrendo et nigerrimo scuto, ita ut sol paulo ante, cooperta.

Anno DCCLIII, Bonifacius, qui et Uinfridus, Francorum episcopus, cum quinquaginta tribus martyrio coronatur; et pro eo Redgerus consecratur archiepiscopus a Stephano papa.

Anno DCCLVII, Aedilbaldus rex Merciorum a suis tutoribus nocte morte fraudulenta miserabiliter peremptus occubuit; Beornredus regnare coepit; Cyniulfus rex Occidentalium Saxonum obiit. Eodem etiam anno Offa, fugato Beornredo, Merciorum regnum sanguinolento quaesivit gladio.

Anno DCCLVIII, Eadberctus rex Nordanhymbrorum Dei amoris causa, et caelestis patriae uiolentia, accepta sancti Petri tonsura, filio suo Osuulfo regnum reliquit.

Anno DCCLVIII, Osuulfus a suis ministris facinore occisus est;

et Edilualdus anno eodem a sua plebe electus intrauit in regnum;

cuius secundo anno magna tribulatio mortalitatis uenit et duobus ferme annis permansit, populantibus duris ac diuersis egritudinibus, maxime tamen dysenteriae languore.

Anno DCCLXI, Oengus Pictorum rex obiit, qui regni sui principium usque ad finem facinore cruento tyrannus perduxit carnifex; et Osuini occisus est.

Anno DCCLXV, Aluchredus rex susceptus est in regnum.

Anno DCCLXVI, Ecgberctus archiepiscopus prosapia regali ditatus, ac diuina scientia imbutus, et Frithubertus, uere fideles episcopi, ad Dominum migrauerunt.

In the year 739, Edilhart, king of the West-Saxons, died, as did Archbishop Nothelm.

In the year 740, Cuthbert was consecrated in Nothelm's stead. Ethelbald, king of the Mercians, cruelly and wrongfully wasted part of Northumbria, their king, Eadbert, with his army, being employed against the Picts. Bishop Ethelwald died also, and Conwulf, was consecrated in his stead. Arnwin and Eadbert were slain.

In the year 741, a great drought came upon the country. Charles, king of the Franks, died; and his sons, Caroloman and Pippin, reigned in his stead.

In the year 745, Bishop Wilfrid and Ingwald, Bishop of London, departed to the Lord.

In the year 747, the man of God, Herefrid, died.

In the year 750, Cuthred, king of the West Saxons, rose up against king Ethelbald and Oengus; Theodor and Eanred died; Eadbert added the plain of Kyle and other places to his dominions.

In the year 753, in the fifth year of King Eadbert, on the 9th of January, an eclipse of the sun came to pass; afterwards, in the same year and month, on the 24th day of January, the moon suffered an eclipse, being covered with a gloomy, black shield, in like manner as was the sun a little while before.

In the year 754, Boniface, called also Winfrid, Bishop of the Franks, received the crown of martyrdom, together with fifty-three others; and Redger was consecrated archbishop in his stead, by pope Stephen.

In the year 757, Ethelbald, king of the Mercians, was treacherously and miserably murdered, in the night, by his own guards; Beornred began his reign; Cyniwulf, king of the West Saxons, died; and the same year, Offa, having put Beornred to flight, sought to gain the kingdom of the Mercians by bloodshed.

In the year 758, Eadbert, king of the Northumbrians, receiving St. Peter's tonsure for the love of God, and to the end that he might take the heavenly country by force, left the kingdom to his son Oswulf.

In the year 755, Oswulf was wickedly murdered by his own thegns; and Ethelwald, being chosen the same year by his people, entered upon the kingdom; in whose second year there was great tribulation by reason of pestilence, which continued almost two years, divers grievous sicknesses raging, but more especially the disease of dysentery.

In the year 761, Oengus, king of the Picts, died; who, from the beginning to the end of his reign, continued to be a blood-stained and tyrannical butcher; Oswin was also slain.

In the year 765, King Aluchred came to the throne.

In the year 766 a.d., Archbishop Egbert, of the royal race, and endued with divine knowledge, as also Frithbert, both of them truly faithful bishops, departed to the Lord.

The Biographies



A reconstructed Anglo-Saxon farm — near the remains at Jarrow is ‘Bede’s World’, a museum dedicated to the life and times of Bede. The museum celebrates Anglo-Saxon cultural achievements, including a working example of a reconstructed Anglo-Saxon farm called Gyrwe after the Old English name for Jarrow.

BEDE by William Hunt



BEDE, or more accurately BÆDA (673–735), was born in the district which was the next year given for the foundation of the monastery of St. Peter's, at Wearmouth, in what is now the county of Durham. The exact date of his birth has been disputed. It depends on the short account which he gives of himself at the end of the 'Historia Ecclesiastica.' He brings that work down to 731 — for the notice of the defeat of the Saracens in the following year is probably an insertion made later, either by himself or by some other hand — and he says that he had then reached his fifty-ninth year. Mabillon (*Acta SS. O. B.* iii. 505) is therefore probably right in fixing his birth in 673. Some, however (Pagi, *Critic. in Ann. Baron.*, followed by Stevenson), place it in 674, and others (Gehle, *Disput. Hist. Theol.* and *Mon. Hist. Brit.*) in 672. Besides the short account which Bæda gives of himself, and what we can glean from his writings and from incidental notices of him by others, we have no trustworthy materials for his life until we come to his last hours; for the two anonymous biographies of him (*H. E.* ed. Smith, App., and Mabillon, sæc. iii. 501) are one of the eleventh and the other of the twelfth century.

Early deprived, as it seems, of his parents, Bæda, when seven years old, was placed by his relations under the charge of Benedict Biscop, the abbot of Wearmouth. Shortly before his birth a great ecclesiastical revival began in England. The marriage of Oswiu of Northumbria to Eanfled led to the triumph of the Roman over the Celtic church in the north, and Wilfrith, the champion of St. Peter, was made bishop. Archbishop Theodore began to reform the episcopate after the Roman model, and in a national synod held at Hertford in 673 put an end to the unsystematic practices of the Celtic church. English bishops were for the future to keep to their own dioceses, and not to wander about wherever they would, like the Celtic missionary bishops. The introduction of the Benedictine rule in place of the primitive monachism of the Celts was a movement of a like nature. In this work Benedict Biscop, the guardian of Bæda, took a leading part. When, in 674, he founded St. Peter's at Wearmouth, he sent for workmen from Gaul, who built his monastery after the Roman style. In 682 he founded the other home of Bæda, the monastery of St. Paul's at Jarrow. Foreign artificers filled the windows of his two great houses with glass. The pictured forms of saints and the scenes of sacred history adorned the walls of his churches. Above all, he provided his monks with a noble collection of books, which he deemed necessary for their instruction (*Vit. Abb.* 11). He fetched John, the archcantor of St. Peter's, from Rome, who taught them, and indeed all who came to learn, the ritual of the Roman church. And by his constant journeys abroad, Benedict brought his

houses into the closest connection with the ecclesiastical life of the continent. At the same time there is evidence that there was no narrow spirit in the brotherhood which he formed, and that its relations with the Celtic church were not unfriendly (*H. E.* v. c. 21). Such, then, were the influences which were brought to bear on the youth of Bæda. They had a marked effect on his character and work.

When Ceolfrith was appointed to preside over the new foundation at Jarrow, Bæda seems to have gone with him. He can scarcely be said to have changed his home; for the two monasteries were in truth one, so close was the connection between them, and after the death of Benedict, Ceolfrith ruled over both alike (*Vit. Abb.* 15). We may venture to appropriate to the boyhood of Bæda a story told by one of his contemporaries (*Hist. Abb. Gyrv.* auct. anon. 14). A pestilence so thinned the brotherhood at Jarrow, that there was not one monk left who could read or answer the responses save Ceolfrith and a little boy whom he had brought up. So the abbot was forced to order that the services should be sung without responses, save at matins and vespers. For one week this went on, until the abbot could no longer bear the dreariness of it. After that he and the child laboured day by day through the whole services, singing each in his turn alone, until others learned to take their part.

In his nineteenth year Bæda was ordained deacon. The early age at which he was allowed to receive ordination implies that he was distinguished by holiness and ability. He entered the priesthood at the canonical age of thirty. In both cases he was presented by his abbot, Ceolfrith, and received his orders from the hands of Bishop John of Beverley (*H. E.* v. c. 24). A tradition that Bæda visited Rome was current in the time of William of Malmesbury, and is mentioned by him (*Gest. Reg.* i. 57). Malmesbury gives a letter of Pope Sergius to Ceolfrith, telling him that he had need of a learned man to help him in certain matters of ecclesiastical law, and asking him to send Bæda to him—'Dei famulum Bedam venerabilis tui monasterii presbyterum.' Now, as Sergius died in 701, Bæda could not have been a priest at the time of this invitation. The letter of Sergius, however, exists in a manuscript (*Cotton*, Tib. A. xv. 50-52) which is two centuries earlier than the time of Malmesbury. This manuscript, in place of 'Bedam,' has 'N' = *nomen*, signifying that a name was to be supplied, and the word 'presbyterum' is also left out in it. Both are interlined by a later hand. It is, however, possible that Bæda may have been specially invited to Rome; for Malmesbury may have copied from a still earlier manuscript, and the omission of his name in the Cotton MS. may have been through carelessness. As this manuscript stands (without 'presbyterum'), it seems as if some word was left out, and 'presbyterum' may have been written in the original papal letter, through ignorance of the fact that Bæda had not at that time entered priest's orders. Sergius, when in need of advice, may well have asked for Bæda. He would scarcely have asked Ceolfrith for one of his monks without naming any one in particular. Nor would it be wonderful that the pope should have heard of the learning of the

young Northumbrian monk; for the visits of Benedict to Rome had drawn his monasteries into close connection with the papal see, and the letter, whichever way we read it, illustrates the high position which the houses of Wearmouth and Jarrow already held in Christendom. Some of Bæda's fellow-monks were sent by Ceolfrith to Rome in 701, and came back with a papal privilege for their house. Bæda did not go with them (*Vit. Abb.* 15; *De Temporum ratione*, 47). The various legends which relate to his supposed visit to Rome may therefore be passed over. The story which takes him to Cambridge no longer demands refutation, though it once formed the subject of much bygone antiquarianism (*T. Cæli Vindiciæ*, &c. ed. Hearne, 1719).

With the exception of a few visits to friends, Bæda spent all his life at Jarrow from the time when he moved thither as a child. He studied the Scriptures with all his might, and while he was diligent in observing the discipline of his order, and in taking part in the daily services of the church, he loved to be always learning, teaching, or writing (*H. E.* v. 24). His character and opinions are to be gathered chiefly from his books. He was a man of gentle and cultivated feelings, full of kindly sympathies, and with a singular freshness of mind, which gave life and beauty to his stories. The chapter on the conversion of Northumbria, the tale of how poetic inspiration came to Cædmon, and of how he died, and the whole 'Life of Cuthberht' are but instances of his exquisite power of story-telling. With this power was combined a love of truth and fairness. His condemnation of the cruel and foolish war made by Ecgrith, the benefactor of his house, against the Irish Scots (*H. E.* iv. 26), and his ungrudging record of the good deeds of Wilfrith (*H. E.* iv. 13, v. 19), are striking proofs of his freedom from prejudice. Brought, as he was from his earliest years, under the influences alike of Iona and Rome and Gaul and Canterbury, he had broad ecclesiastical sympathies. While he condemned and wrote against the Celtic customs concerning the date of Easter and the form of the tonsure, he dwelt much on the holiness of Aidan (*H. E.* iii. 5, 15-17), and he wrote the 'Life of Cuthberht' both in prose and verse. His love for the monastic profession led him to regard with evident admiration the powerful position held by the abbot of Iona (*H. E.* iii. 4), and the universal monachism of the church of Lindisfarne (*Vit. S. Cuth.* 16), though, as a zealous follower of the Benedictine order, which had found its way from the great houses of the continent to the new foundations of Northumbria, he disapproved the laxity of the Celtic rule. Filled with the desire of seeing an increase in the episcopate, he contemplated the possibility of providing for new bishops out of the possessions of those religious houses which were unfaithful to their profession, a plan which would have tended to purify the monasteries by reducing their means of luxury, and to exalt their power by closely connecting them with the episcopate (*Ep. ad Ecgb.* 10-12). With views so far-reaching and catholic, Bæda could have had little sympathy with the eager and narrow-minded Wilfrith. The circumstances of his life made Wilfrith look on Cuthberht and on John of Beverley as intruders (*Hist.*

of York, Raine, xxxiv). To Bæda they were saints, and he records with evident disapproval how Eata and Cuthberht and their fellows were driven out of Ripon to make room for Wilfrith (*Vit. S. Cuth.* 8).

The names of several of the friends of Bæda are well known. Most of his works are dedicated to them, and some were written at their request. Among them were Nothelm, afterwards archbishop of Canterbury, and an ecclesiastic named Albinus. Both these helped Bæda in his 'Historia Ecclesiastica,' and Albinus more than any one urged him to undertake the work. Ecgbert, archbishop of York, and Acca and Frithhere, bishops of Hexham and Sherborne, were also his friends. To Acca he dedicated most of his theological works. From this bishop, who was also one of the most faithful friends of Wilfrith (Eddius, 56, 64), Bæda probably obtained the full information which he had about Wilfrith's good deeds. Even Bæda had some enemies who seem to have been jealous of his literary pre-eminence. At a feast held by Wilfrith, bishop of York (*d.* 732), he was accused by some of the guests of having expressed heretical opinions in his 'De Temporibus liber minor.' The scandalous accusation was heard unrebuked by the bishop, and was probably circulated by one of his household. Bæda replied to it by a letter to a friend (*Ep. ad Plegwinum*), which was written with the expressed intention that it should be shown to Wilfrith. In it he speaks plainly of the unseemly revelry of the episcopal feast, and this reference (cf. *Carmen de Pontif. Eccl. Ebor.* 1. 1232) shows that the bishop in question was the second of that name and not the more famous Wilfrith.

Bæda loved to meditate and make notes on the Scriptures. Simeon of Durham (*d.* 1130) records (*Hist. de Dunelm. Eccl.* c. 14) that there used to be shown a stone hut (*mansiuncula*), where, secure from all interruption, he was wont to meditate and work. In the time of Leland (*Collect.* iv. , ed. 1720), the three monks of Jarrow, all who were then left of that once famous congregation, showed what is described as his oratory. The little boy who worked so hard with his abbot to keep up the antiphonal chant when all the burden of the singing lay on them alone, rejoiced all his life to take part in the services of the monastery church. Alcuin, writing after Bæda's death to the monks of Wearmouth, tells them (*Alc. E.* ed. Migne), that he loved to say, 'I know that angels visit the congregation of the brethren at the canonical hours, and what if they should not find me among the brethren? Would they not say, "Where is Bæda? Why comes he not with his brethren to the prayers appointed?"' The attainments of Bæda prove that he must have been a diligent student. He has recorded the name of another of his teachers besides the abbot Ceolfrith. Trumberht, he tells us, used to instruct him in the Scriptures. He had been a pupil of Ceadda, and used to tell his scholar much about his old master (*H. E.* iv. 3). From him doubtless Beeda learned to reverence the holy men of the Celtic church. John of Beverley is also said by Folcard (*Vit. S. Johan.* c. 2) to have been his teacher. It may have been so, but, as Folcard lived in the middle of the eleventh century, he must not be regarded as an

authority on this matter. It is not unlikely that Bæda received help from some of the disciples of Theodore and Hadrian, of whom he speaks with admiration (*H. E.* iv. 2), and he must certainly have come under the instruction of John the archcantor (*Vit. Abb.* 6; see Stevenson's *Introd.* p. ix). Besides knowing Latin he understood Greek and had some acquaintance with Hebrew. He quotes Homer, Lucretius, Virgil, Ovid, Horace, Terence, and many other writers of less classical fame (Wright, *Biog. Lit.* i. 39-41). He was familiar with patristic literature, and was a diligent translator and compiler of extracts from that great storehouse. Like most of his countrymen at that age, he was a singer. His mind was well stored with the songs of his native land, and he had what was then in England the not uncommon gift of improvisation. Besides his powers as an historian and a biographer, he knew all the learning of his time, its grammar, rhetoric, mathematics, and physical science. All his talents were employed in the cause of his church and in the instruction of others. He was a diligent teacher, and found many scholars among the six hundred monks who in his days thronged the sister houses of St. Peter and St. Paul (*Vit. Abb.* 17). Some of these pupils, like Nothelm who has been already mentioned, Huætberht and Cuthberht, two successive abbots of Wearmouth, and Constantine, became the friends of after years, and were among those to whom Bæda dedicated his works.

A sentence in the 'Ep. ad Wicredum de Paschæ Celebratione,' which speaks of 776 as the current year, gave rise to the belief that Bæda lived at least to that date. Mabillon has however pointed out that the sentence is an interpolation by another hand (Pagi, *Critic. Baron.* xii. 401; Mabillon, *Analect.* i. 398). The day of his death is known to have been the Feast of the Ascension, 26 May 735, by a letter written by one of his pupils named Cuthberht to Cuthwine, his fellow scholar (Stevenson, *Introd.* xiv; Simeon of Durham, ; S. Bonifacii *Op.* e, ed. Giles). Bæda, Cuthberht says, suffered from a tightness of breath which grew rapidly worse during the month of April. Up to 26 May, however, he continued his lectures, and through the many sleepless hours of night was still cheerful, sometimes giving thanks to God, sometimes chanting words of Holy Scripture, or lines of English verse, which bade men remember how— 'Before he need go forth, none can be too wise in thinking, how before his soul shall go, what good or ill deeds he hath done, how after death his doom shall be;' or again he sang the antiphons, hoping to console the hearts of his scholars, but when he came to the words 'Leave us not orphans,' he wept much, and they wept with him. And so the days wore on, and in spite of his sickness he worked hard that he might finish his translation into English of the Gospel of St. John, for he knew that it would be of use to the church, and also of some extracts from Bishop Isidore, for 'I do not want my boys,' he said, 'to read what is false, or to have to work at this without profit when I am dead.' On the day of his death, when the rest had gone to the procession held on the festival, his scribe was left alone with him. 'Dearest master,' he said, 'there is one chapter wanting, and it is hard for thee

to question thyself'. 'No, it is easy,' he said; 'take thy pen and write quickly.' He spent the day in giving his little treasures of spice and incense to the priests of the house, in asking their prayers, and in bidding them farewell. The evening came, and his young scribe said, 'There is yet one more sentence, dear master, to write out.' He answered, 'Write quickly.' After a while the boy said, 'Now It is finished.' 'Well,' he said, 'thou hast spoken truly "It is finished."' Then he bade his friends place him where he could look on the spot on which he was wont to kneel in prayer. And lying thus upon the pavement of his cell, he chanted the 'Gloria Patri,' and as he uttered the words 'the Holy Ghost' he breathed his last, and 'so he passed to the kingdom in heaven.'

Bæda was buried at Jarfow. Men recognised the greatness of the loss which had come upon them. Winfrith (St. Boniface) wrote to Cuthberht to beg him to send him one of the works of Bæda, 'that wise searcher of Scripture who of late shone in your house of God like a candle in the church' (Bon. *Ep.* 62, ed. Giles). Before the end of the eighth century, Alcuin used his name to excite the Northumbrian monks to study diligently and betimes, and bade them remember 'what praise Bæda had of men, and how far more glorious a reward from God'. (Mabillon, *Analect.* ii. 310). In his poem on the bishops and other ecclesiastics of the church of York, he reckons over the various powers of the departed master, and speaks of a miracle worked by his relics (*Carmen de Pontif. &c. Eccl. Ebor.* 1. 1300- 1317). In the course of the next century the epithet 'Venerable' began to be generally added to his name. Each year, on the day of his death, men used to come and watch and pray in the church at Jarrow. A certain priest of Durham named Alfred, who lived in the first half of the eleventh century, and who seems to have spent his life in stealing the bones and other relics of departed saints in order to attract the gifts of the faithful to his own church, violated the grave of Bæda. He carried off the bones to Durham, and placed them in the coffin in which St. Cuthberht lay. There they were found at the translation of St. Cuthberht in 1104. Bishop Hugh de Puiset (1153-1195) laid them in a casket of gold and silver in the glorious galilee which he added to his church. In 1541 the casket of Bishop Hugh fell a prey to sacrilegious greed, and the remains of the great English scholar were dispersed (Sim. Dunelm. iii. 7; Gehle, *Disput.* 33 et seq.; As late as the middle of the eighteenth century 'Bede's well' at Moukton, near Jarrow, 'was in repute as a bath for the recovery of infirm or diseased children' (Surtees, *Hist. of Durham*, ii. 80). According to the list which Bæda appended to his 'Historia Ecclesiastica,' the books which he had written by the year 731, when that work was brought to an end, were: 1. On the first part of the Book of Genesis, four books. 2. On the Tabernacle, its Vessels, &c. three books. 3. On the first part of Samuel to the death of Saul, three books. 4. An Allegorical Exposition on the Building of the Temple, two books. 5. On Thirty Questions concerning the Book of the Kings. 6. On the Proverbs of Solomon, three books. 7. On the Song of Solomon, seven books. 8. Extracts

from St. Jerome on the divisions of chapters in Isaiah, Daniel, the twelve Prophets, and part of Jeremiah. 9. On Ezra and Nehemiah, three books. 10. On Habakkuk, one book. 11. An Allegorical Exposition of the Book of Tobit, one book. 12. Chapters for readings in the Pentateuch, Joshua, and Judges. 13. On the Books of Kings and Chronicles. 14. On the Book of Job. 15. On the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. 16. On Isaiah, Ezra, and Nehemiah. 17. On Mark, four books. 18. On Luke, six books. 19. Two books of 'Homilies on the Gospel.' 20. Extracts from St. Augustine on the Apostle (Paul). 21. On the Acts, two books. 22. A Book on each of the General Epistles. 23. On the Apocalypse, three books. 24. Chapters for readings in the New Testament except the Gospels. 25. A book of Letters, in which are: 'Of the Six Ages,' 'Of the Resting Places of Israel,' 'Of the Words of Is. xxiv. 22,' 'Of Bissextile,' 'Of Anatolius on the Equinox.' 26. On the Histories of the Saints, on the Life and Passion of St. Felix. 27. A more correct translation from the Greek of the 'Life and Passion of St. Anastasius.' 28. The life of St. Cuthberht in verse, the same in prose. 29. The History of the Abbots, Benedict, Ceolfrith, and Huætberht. 30. The 'Ecclesiastical History of our island and people,' five books. 31. A Martyrology. 32. A book of Hymns. 33. A book of Epigrams. 34. Two books on the 'Nature of Things' and on 'Chronology.' 35. A larger book on Chronology. 36. On Orthography. 37. On the Art of Metre, and appended to it a little book on the Figures and modes of speech in Holy Scripture.

To this list must be added as undoubtedly genuine the letters to Albinus and Ecgberht and the 'Retractationes' which were written later than 731, the book on the Holy Places written before that year, but left out by Bæda probably through forgetfulness, and a 'Pœnitentiale.'

Of the works enumerated by Baeda no genuine copies exist of 8, 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 27, 33. The extracts from Isidore, and the translation of the Gospel of St. John which employed his dying hours, have also not been preserved. And it is exceedingly doubtful whether the Hymns (32) attributed to him should, for the most part at least, be held authentic. Some scientific and other treatises, such as the 'De Septem Miraculis Mundi' and the 'De Computo seu Indigitatione,' have been wrongly considered to be his work, and a little poem entitled 'Cuculus' (Goldast, *Ovidii Erotica*, Frankf. 1610), is perhaps also spurious.

It is probable that the educational works, e.g. 'De Sanctis Locis' and 'De Natura Rerum,' were the earliest of Bæda's writings. The 'De Temporibus' (liber minor) ends at 702. It was written five years before the 'Epistola ad Plegwinum sive de sex ætatibus,' and if, as seems almost certain, the bishop mentioned in that letter was the second Wilfrith, the dates of both of these works must be considerably later than has been supposed. As the 'Commentary on Samuel' (3) is dedicated to Ceolfrith, it must have been written before his death in 716, while the 'Historia Abbatum' (29) was written after that event. The 'De Temporibus' (liber major) (35) ends with the ninth

year of Leo the Isaurian, viz. 724, or, according to the author's chronology, 729, and may be considered to have been finished at that date. From a letter of Acca prefixed to the 'Commentary on Luke' (18) it is evident that that work was written after the 'Commentary on the Acts' (21). The 'Historia Ecclesiastica' (30), as before mentioned, was finished in 731. In the same or in the next year was written the 'Epistola ad Albinum.' The 'Liber Retractationum' also came after the 'Historia.' As the 'Epistola ad Ecgberhtum' was written on his accession to the see of York in 734, it may be considered the latest extant work of Bæda.

Collective editions of the writings of Bæda have been published at Paris in 6 vols. fol. 1544-5, reprinted in 1554; (these editions are extremely rare, and of the earlier one, only a portion is in the British Museum); at Basle in 8 vols. fol. by F. Hervagius, 1563; at Cologne in 1612, a reprint of the Basle edition, but not so fine a work, reprinted at Cologne in 1688; at London in 12 vols. 8vo, by F. A. Giles, LL.D., 1843-4; and in the 'Patrologiæ Cursus Completus' (xc.-xcv.) of J. P. Migne, Paris, 1844. Of the various editions of the several works those only will be mentioned which appear noteworthy. A list, which is probably complete, up to 1842, will be found in Wright's 'Biog. Brit Lit.' i. 283-288.

The commentaries on the Old Testament are for the most part in the folio editions, and in the more complete collection of Dr. Giles. They were also published in Paris by Gering and Rembolt, 1499— 'a very rare book' (Wright). Many of them are dedicated to Acca. They are filled with allegorical interpretations. Even the book of Tobit is made to contain teachings about Christ and the sacraments. For the most part these works appear to be compiled from the Fathers. Bæda says in his book on Genesis (1) that, as the works of Basil, Ambrose, and Augustine are too expensive and too deep for most people, he 'has culled, as from the pleasant meadows of far flowering Paradise, what may supply the need of the weak. This work was appended to Usher's 'Historia Dogmatum,' 1689, and was edited, with some other writings of Bæda, by Wharton (4to, London), in 1693. The 'Thirty Questions on Kings' (5) were propounded by Nothelm, and the treatise was written for him. Short comments of a more practical character than those in most of Bæda's works are appended to the 'Proverbs' (6), though even here allegorical interpretation is not deserted. It wholly prevails in the last part of the commentary. This part is printed separately in the folio editions, under the title of 'Mulier Fortis;' but is really the exposition of c. xxxi. 10-31. The first book of the 'Exposition of the Canticles' (7) was written against the errors of Julian, Bishop of Celano. The 'Commentary on Habakkuk' (10) is not in the folio editions, and was first published by Martene in his 'Thesaurus Novus,' Paris, 1717. It is dedicated to an abess.

The commentaries on the New Testament were printed at Paris in 1521. They are also in the folios, and in Dr. Giles's editions. In his dedicatory letter to Acca attached to his commentary on 'Mark,' Bæda says that he has placed

on the margin the names of the fathers from whose works his comments are extracted, and he begs that transcribers will not neglect to copy these entries. This request has not been obeyed. A book purporting to be his, 'In Apostolum quæcunque in opusculis S. Augustini,' &c. (20), was published by G. Boussard, Paris, 1499, but has been shown by Baronius to be spurious. A preface to the 'Seven General Epistles' (22) exists in one, and that the earliest, manuscript only. This manuscript was discovered by Wharton in the library of Caius College, Cambridge. The reason of its omission in later manuscripts cannot be mistaken, for it argues that the first place in the apostolic company belongs to St. James and not to St. Peter. An illustration of the large-mindedness of Bæda is afforded by his book on the 'Apocalypse' (23), where, he says, he has followed Tychonius the Donatist, whose interpretations, where they are not affected by the errors of his sect, he praises highly. He adheres to his allegorical method of exposition in his New Testament commentaries, and even applies it to the Acts of the Apostles (21). The 'Retractationes' are corrections of the commentary on the Acts. In this work Bæda says that he made a careful collation of the Greek codex. The Homilies on the Gospels (in folio editions, and with eleven before unedited by Martene, 1717) were for a long time held to be doubtful. By the discovery of an early manuscript at Boulogne, Dr. Giles has proved the authenticity of fifty-nine Homilies of Bæda, which he has published in his collective edition. The teaching about the name Peter in Hom. 27 is in accord with that of the preface to the General Epistles. These discourses certainly present a high view of the sacrament of the Lord's supper (Homs. 4 and 37), but at the same time do not contain the doctrine afterwards propounded by Radbert. The opinions of Bæda on this question were represented in different lights in the once celebrated discussion between Rev. Dr. Lingard and Rev. H. Soames. A curious example of the allegorical method of interpretation is to be found in Hom. 18, where the six water-pots of Cana are explained as types of the six ages of the world.

The 'Life of St. Felix of Nola' (26), a prose version of the poem of Paulinus, was published in Bolland, 'Acta SS.' i. January 1643, and by Smith in 1722. The metrical 'Life of St. Cuthberht' (28), written in Latin hexameters, is a proof of the learning of Bæda rather than of any poetic feeling. It is included in the 'Antiquæ Lectiones' of Canisius, v. In the preface to the prose 'Life' Bæda says that he derived his information from those who were best acquainted with the truth. He certainly used very largely the anonymous 'Life' printed in 'Acta SS.' Mart. iii. and by Stevenson. He frequently, he tells us, submitted his sheets to the priest Herefrith and others, who had long known Cuthberht, and made such alterations as they suggested. At length the work was sent to Lindisfarne, where for two days it was carefully examined by the elder monks, who approved it and gave Bæda some fresh information. When he had made these additions, he dedicated the book to the abbot Eadfrith and the congregation of Lindisfarne, and handed it over to the transcribers. In this preface Bæda refers to the insertion of his name in

white in the book of Lindisfarne. This placed him amongst those benefactors who were entitled to be remembered in the prayers of that house. Both the Lives of St. Cuthberht are in 'Acta SS. O. S. B.' sæc. ii., Paris, 1669; in the 'Historical Works' by Smith; and in the 'Opera Hist. Minora' of Stevenson (Eng. Hist. Soc), 1838. The 'Lives of the Abbots' (29) is founded on another anonymous work. It has been printed by Ware, Dublin, 1664; by Wharton, London, 1693; by Smith and by Stevenson. The 'Martyrologium' (31), as published in the folio editions and Antwerp, 1564, was shown by Henschen to be largely spurious. His discovery of an early manuscript in the library of Queen Christina led to a satisfactory sifting of the work, and in the edition of Smith the entries of Bæda are distinguished from those by other hands. The work generally known as the 'De Sex Ætatibus' is really a part of the 'De Temporum ratione' (35). It was printed with 'De Natura Rerum' at Venice, 1505, at Basle, 1529, and by Smith. The last part, or Sexta Ætas, containing extracts from Eutropius, Orosius, and Gildas, concerning Britain, is printed alone in 'Mon. Hist. Brit.' and by Stevenson. The chronicle of the earlier ages is chiefly taken from Eusebius (*M. H. B.*). The 'Pœnitentiale' was printed in an imperfect form by Martene and Durand, in collectio vii., from a manuscript at Andain; and correctly by Wasserschleben, in 'Bussordnungen der abendländischen Kirche,' from a Vienna manuscript: and in Haddan and Stubbs's 'Councils and Ecclesiastical Documents,' iii. 326; the 'Liber de Remediis Peccatorum,' printed at Venice, 1684, and in the collective editions, is a compilation (Haddan and Stubbs).

Mr. Stevenson in his Introduction has given an exhaustive account of the sources from which the 'Historia Ecclesiastica' (30) is derived. Up to the coming of St. Augustine in 596 the work is compiled from former writers, e.g. Eutropius and Gildas, from legends and popular traditions, and from the 'Life of St. Germanus' by Constantius of Lyons. From 596 Bæda used both written documents and oral intelligence. His extracts from books now become few. Among these books Stevenson reckons (*Introd.* xxiv) the 'Life of Gregory the Great' by Paul the Deacon. As, however, Paul was born 720-725 (Waitz, *Præf. Paul. Diac.*) it is probable that he and Bæda went to some common source. Paul certainly had the 'Historia Ecclesiastica' (30) at hand when he was writing his 'History of the Lombards.' Bæda made considerable use of local records. Albinus and Nothelm seem to have furnished him with materials for the history of the kingdom of Kent, of the archbishops of Canterbury, of the diocese of Rochester, and of East Anglia. From Bishop Daniel he derived his knowledge of the history of the West and South Saxons, and from the monks of Læstingaeu of the work of Cedd and Ceadda. Bishop Cyneberht gave him a few materials concerning his diocese of Lindesey. His account of Northumbrian history is naturally full, and in some parts, e.g. the history of Eadwine, records details which show that he must have used important local annals. The official documents contained in the 'Historia Ecclesiastica' consist of copies made from the papal registers for Bæda by

Nothelm (*Ann. Baron.* xii. 364) and of the proceedings of English councils. Bæda constantly refers to oral communications. He is particular in recording the name and description of any one from whom he received information. He evidently weighed the credibility of his informants, and distinguished between the value of the reports of eye-witnesses and of those who only repeated what they had heard. The earliest edition of '*Historia Ecclesiastica*' is a folio, without pagination, catch-words, date, place, or name of printer. It has been assigned to H. Eggesteyn, Strasburg, cir. 1473 (Ebert). Two other editions were put out before the end of the century, at Strasburg in 1483 and at Spire in 1490. Next come the Strasburg edition of 1500, and the Hagenau edition by J. Rynman, 1506 (*M. H. B.* 71). All these are in small folio, double columns, and Gothic letters, and are mainly reprints of the first edition. The '*Historia Ecclesiastica*' was again printed at Antwerp by Gravius in 1550. Although this is to a large extent a reprint of the 1500 edition, it supplies the hitherto unprinted conclusion of v. 24, and is a fine and scarce book. It was reprinted at Louvain, 1566; at Heidelberg, 1587, by Commeline, who corrected several errors by collating a good manuscript; at Cologne, 1601; and in the Basle and Cologne collective editions. The first edition brought out in England was by A. Whelo, Cambridge, 1644, together with the Anglo-Saxon version attributed to King Ælfred. A critical edition was produced by P. F. Chifflet, S.J., Paris, 1681. In 1722 all former editions were superseded by that of Canon J. Smith, printed at Cambridge, chiefly founded on the manuscript of Bishop More in the Cambridge Library. It contains the Anglo-Saxon version and other historical works, and is a very noble volume. Another edition of the historical works was brought out by J. Stevenson in 2 vols. 8vo, for the Eng. Hist. Soc., London, 1838, with an excellent introduction. The '*Historia Ecclesiastica*' has also been edited by B. Hussey, Oxford, 1846, by G. H. Moberly, Oxford, 1869, and lib. iii. and iv. by Mayor and Lumby, Pitt Press, 1879. The '*Ep. ad Ecgberhtum*' contains interesting information as to the condition of the English church at the time, together with the plan of Bæda for the improvement of its discipline. It has been edited by Ware, Dublin, 1664; Wharton, London, 1693; Smith and Stevenson.

The treatise '*De Natura Rerum*' (34) contains such physical science as was then known. It collects the wisdom of the ancient world on this subject, and has the special merit of referring phenomena to natural causes. It was published together with the two works on chronology at Basle, 1529. '*Liber de Orthographia*' (36) was printed in the '*Gramm. Lat. Auct. Ant.*,' Han. 1605. The '*De Arte Metrica*' (37) contains a large number of quotations, not only from the better known, but from obscure Latin poets, and has many references to Greek examples. It was printed by Putsch in '*Vet. Gramm.*,' Paris, 1616, and is contained in '*Gramm. Lat.*' of H. Keil, Lei. The short treatises '*De Schematibus et Tropis*' (37) were published at Milan by Ant. Zarotus, 1473, with two other grammatical works. This book is without signatures, catch-words, or pagination, and is very scarce (Ebert). It has also

been published at Venice, 1522; at Basle, 1527, &c. It is included in the 'Rhetores Lat. Min.' of C. Halm, Leip., 1863. Bæda took his 'Libellus de situ Hierusalem sive de Locis Sanctis' from the work of Adamnan. He has not included this epitome in his index, but refers to it (*Hist. Eccl.* v. 17) at the close of his extract from the book of Adamnan. It was printed by Mabillon in 'Acta SS.' iii. 1. Eleven hymns attributed to Bæda (32) were printed by Cassander, Paris, 1556; one of these, 'De Die Judicii,' is in Simeon of Durham's 'De Gestis Regum.' Four others have been added by Giles in his 'Opera omnia.' Of the Letters (25) besides the 'Ep. ad Ecgberhtum' are preserved — the 'Ep. ad Albinum' in Mabillon, *Analect.* i. in Smith and in Stevenson; the 'Ep. ad Plegwinum de Sex Ætatibus,' on the occasion of the accusation made at the feast of Wilfrith, was edited by Ware, Dublin, 1664, and Wharton, London, 1693; the 'Ep. ad Wicredum' is in the folio editions; the 'Ep. ad Accam de Mansionibus,' &c., and 'Ad Accam de eo quod ait Esaias,' &c., were first printed by Dr. Giles in his 'Opera omnia,' 1843, and the 'Ep. de Bissexto' in the 'Anecdota,' edited by Giles for the Caxton Soc., 1844.

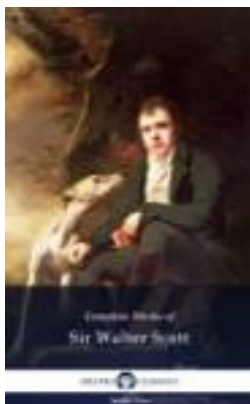
The Anglo-Saxon version of the 'Historia Ecclesiastica' attributed to Ælfred has been noticed. An Anglo-Saxon version of the 'De Die Judicii' was published under the title 'Be Domes Dæga' by the E. Eng. Text. Soc., 1876. Translations of the 'Historia Ecclesiastica' into English have been made by T. Stapleton, Antwerp, 1565; by F. Stevens, London, 1723; by W. Hurst, London, 1814; by F. A. Giles, London, 1840; and by L. Gidley, Oxford, 1870.

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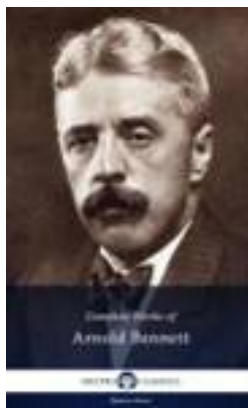
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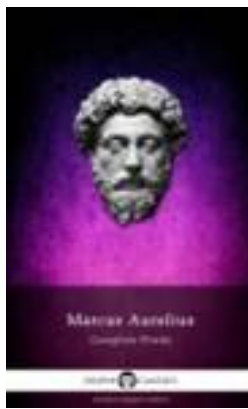
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Pliny the Elder
Pliny the Younger
Plotinus
Plutarch
Polybius
Propertius
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Sallust
Sappho
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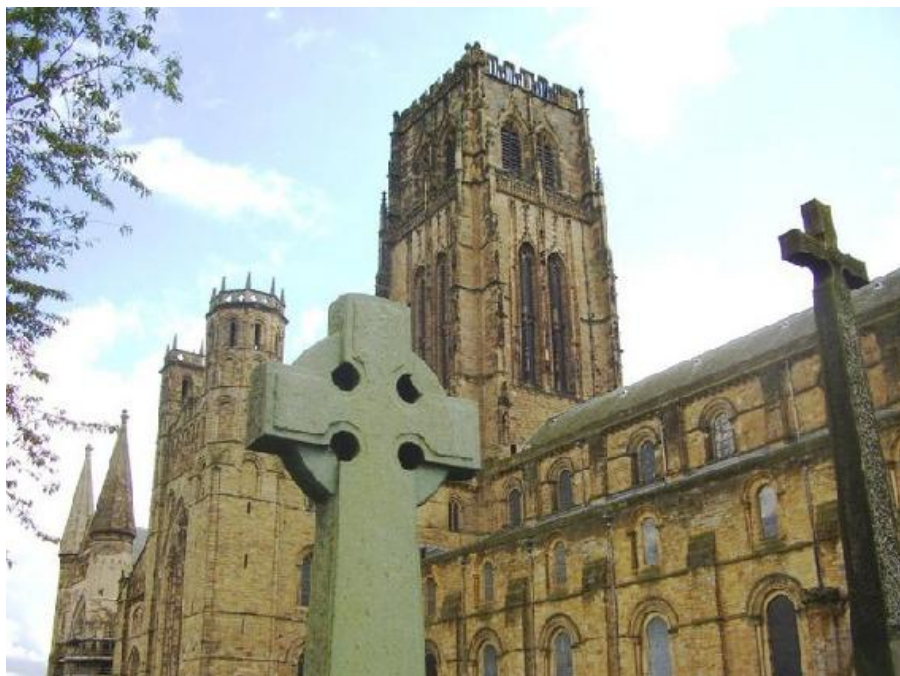
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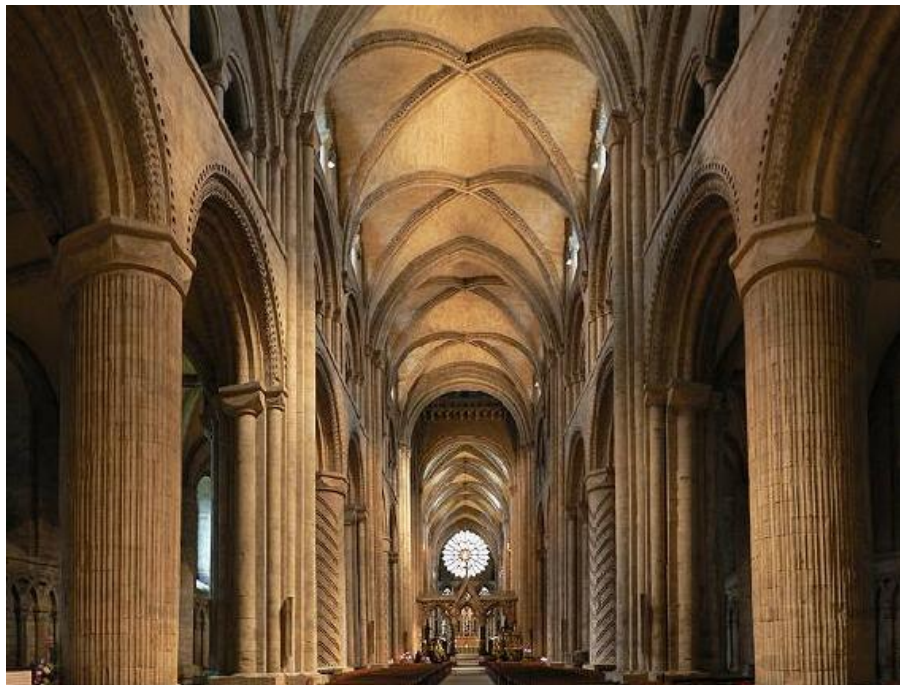
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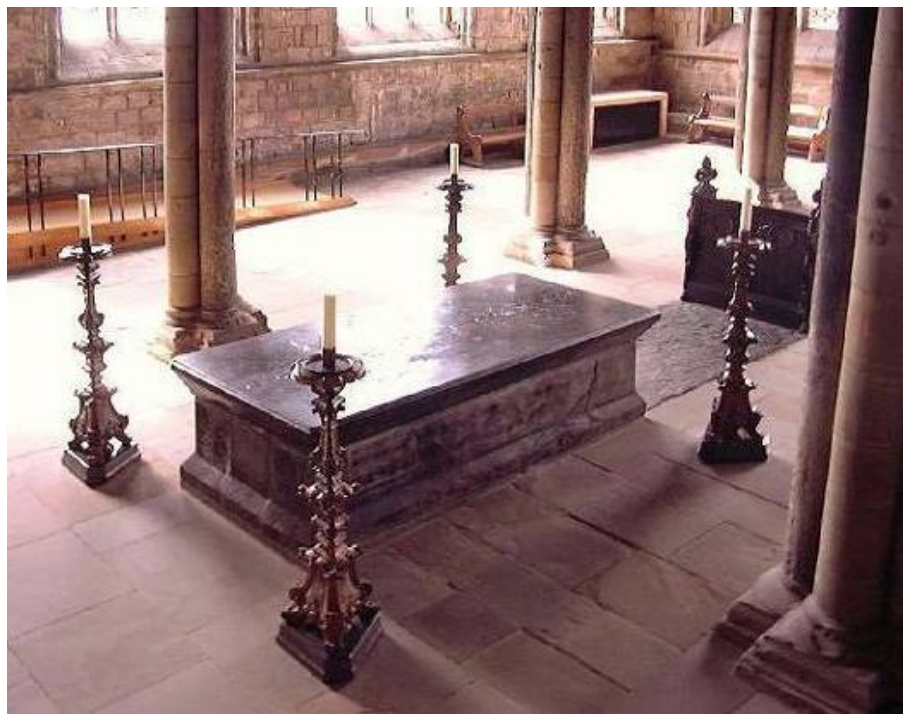
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Durham Cathedral — Bede's final resting place



The cathedral's nave



Bede's tomb